

No. 809.

APRIL 1, 1921.

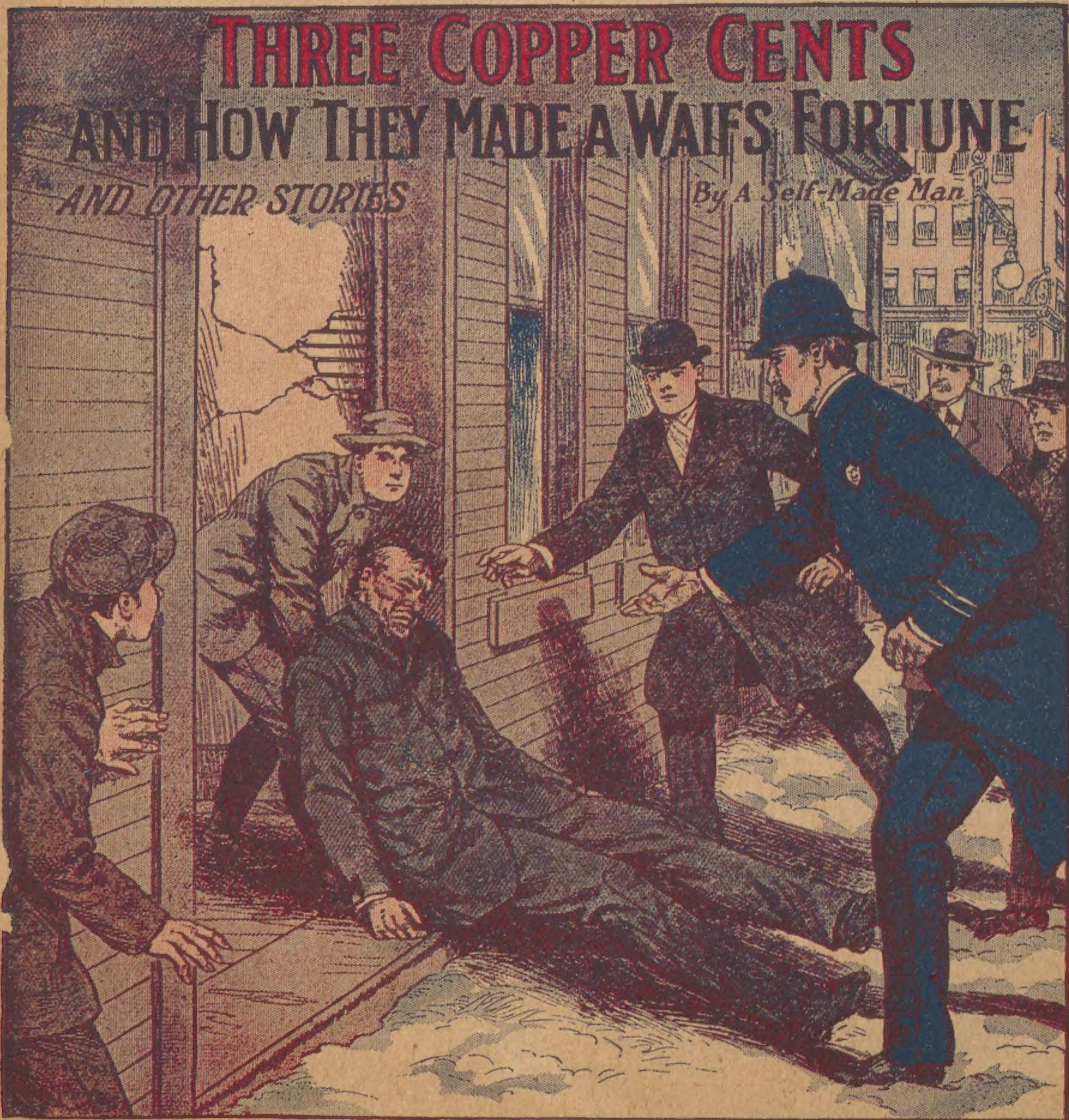
7 Cents

FAME ^{AND} FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

THREE COPPER CENTS AND HOW THEY MADE A WAIF'S FORTUNE *AND OTHER STORIES*

By A Self-Made Man.



As Joe lifted the vagrant from the sidewalk and began dragging him into the entry, a policeman and several men came up. "Drunk eh?" said the cop. "I'll run him in." "No, he isn't drunk," replied Joe. "I think he's starving."

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

Issued Weekly—Subscription price, \$3.50 per year; Canada, \$4.00; Foreign, \$4.50. Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as Second-Class Matter, October 4, 1911, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

No. 809

NEW YORK, APRIL 1, 1921.

Price 7 Cents

THREE COPPER CENTS

AND HOW THEY MADE A WAIF'S FORTUNE

BY A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—Poor Joe.

"G'wan! Chase yerself out'r here!" cried the barkeeper of a saloon in the slums of New York to a bright-faced, poorly dressed boy who had crept into the semi-gloom of the place and stood warming himself before the fire of a small drum-stove.

It was a bitter cold morning in February, and the groggery had just been opened up to catch the early trade. The speaker was a hard-looking man of thirty, unshaven and slouchy, whose disposition, warped in childhood, was not improved by having had to turn out of his warm bed at what respectable people would have called an unseasonable hour. He had started the fire, swept the floor, after a fashion, and was tidying up the bar when he spied the shivering boy. He had no sympathy for anybody but himself. The boy, whose name was Joe Duncan, and who was so far down the scale of human luck that he had no home, or friends, or money, cast an appealing look at the barkeeper.

"I'm only warming myself a bit, mister. It's awfully cold this morning, and I was almost frozen when I was turned out of the stable around the corner where I slept last night," he said.

"Get out of here, d'ye hear?" shouted the man, picking up a bung-starter and moving toward the end of the bar.

His intentions were evident, so the boy reluctantly retreated from the stove and passed out into the gray air of the bleak, almost deserted, street.

"My, but this is a hard world!" muttered Joe, thrusting his hands into his pockets and starting off at a brisk walk to keep his blood in circulation. "Ever since my mother died luck has been dead against me. I haven't been able to get a decent job, though I've tried desperately hard. Nobody wants me, I guess, because I don't look halfway decent. How can I look otherwise when I don't get a show?"

Joe didn't speak more than the truth when he said he was playing in hard luck. His general appearance was certainly against him, though his face was honest and intelligent-looking. Though he looked very like a typical street Arab, he was far from being one. He was fairly well educated, having attended the grammar school in his district until his mother's death threw him on his own resources. At that time his appearance was presentable. He had two suits of clothes—an every-day one, and a better one for Sunday.

He had a small trunk fairly well supplied with shirts, underwear and other things. The undertaker agreed to give his mother respectable burial in a \$10 grave in return for all her personal effects and furniture, and \$15 cash that remained unexpended in her pocketbook. Joe accepted his proposition, and on his return from the simple funeral in the carriage with the undertaker, got an expressman to carry his trunk to a room he had rented in the neighborhood. Next morning, with his best suit on, he started out to look for a job, for he barely had money enough to live on at a cheap restaurant for a week.

Five days were passed in unsuccessful quest of work, and he was getting nervous over the immediate future. In two days more he would be expected to pay his second week's room rent, and at that moment he had no idea where the money would come from. Then the question of food presented an equally perplexing problem. Returning, a bit disheartened, to his lodgings at the close of the fifth day, a fresh disaster awaited him. During his absence the frame house had been gutted by a fire, and his trunk, with all it contained, no longer existed.

Joe was stunned by this misfortune, for he was literally thrown out on the street, with nothing but what he had on his back. Joe was hungry as well as cold on the morning we introduce him to the reader. His supper the night before had been very meager—a sandwich and a cup of coffee handed him by a cheap restaurant keeper for a slight service—while his mid-day meal had consisted of sundry scraps which he got from a trio of longshoremen on the dock, who felt a certain sympathy for his hungry condition. He had reached the third corner in his aimless walk when he stepped on a small patch of thin ice. The cleaner of the saloon on the corner had thrown a pail of water toward the gutter the night before and part of it, landing on the stone walk, had frozen hard. The boy slipped, lost his balance, went down with a whack that nearly shook the breath out of his body, and glided into the gutter in a heap.

Inasmuch as he suffered no injury, he counted himself mighty lucky. He was badly shaken up, though, and when he sat up he looked around him in a dazed way—was unable to decide at the moment whether the corner building had not fallen upon him.

"Gosh!" he ejaculated, as he started to pick himself up.

He turned over on his hands and knees, with his eyes staring into the gutter, when, to his surprise and joy, he spied a silver quarter. He picked it up with a whoop, for it spelled a warm and much-needed breakfast.

"That tumble was a lucky one, after all," he breathed. "My, I can have a real meal now—beefsteak, rolls, potatoes and coffee. What a feast!"

He smacked his lips at the thought, and, gripping the coin tighter than was necessary, he started for a small restaurant up the block. Entering the "beanery," he slipped into a chair at a table.

The solitary waiter who was attending to several other early customers found time to take Joe's order, and shouted it in to the cook through a small hole, like the box-office opening at a theater, minus the glass. In due time a small piece of chuck, with fried potatoes, two water rolls and a cup of coffee was set before Joe, together with three slices of bread that went with the order, for the rolls were extra. The waiter slapped down a dirty twenty-five-cent check and moved on to a new customer who had just drifted in. Tough as the steak was, it tasted delicious to Joe. He felt like a different boy when he walked out into the cold street again.

It was now getting on toward seven, and there was considerable life on the streets. The small grocery and other shops that thrived on the big tenements around the neighborhood were opening up for business. Joe had almost reached the next corner when he noticed a man staggering in his walk ahead of him. Joe was close to him when the man, whose age appeared to be twenty-five, collapsed all in a heap on the sidewalk and lay there without movement. As Joe bent over the wretched man, whom he took for a bum, the man opened his bloodshot eyes and moaned:

"Food—food!"

Then his eyes closed and he groaned dismally. Had the man been drunk, the scent of the bar-room would have floated from his person, and his breath would have suggested a distillery. He presented no such indications, and the boy jumped to the conclusion that he was some famished outcast who had reached the limit of human endurance. As Joe lifted the vagrant from the sidewalk and began dragging him to a near-by entry, a policeman and several men came up.

"Drunk, eh?" said the cop. "I'll run him in."

"No, he isn't drunk," replied Joe. "I think he's starving."

CHAPTER II.—Three Copper Cent.

"Starving!" exclaimed the officer incredulously.

"Yes," answered Joe, "for there isn't a whiff of rum about him."

The policeman bent down and gave the outcast a critical look.

"I guess you're right," he admitted. "Here's a dime. Run into the corner saloon and get some brandy."

Joe took the money and presently returned with a small glass about a third full of a low-grade brandy. He knelt down and put it to the man's lips.

"Open your mouth. Here's something to drink," he said.

The poor fellow opened both his eyes and mouth and Joe poured some of the liquor down his throat. It went against his breath and brought on a coughing paroxysm. What he swallowed revived him some, and Joe got him to take the rest by degrees. The brandy gave him temporary strength, and he was able to sit up.

"If you people will chip in enough to give this poor fellow a meal, I will help him to the nearest restaurant," said Joe to the crowd which had gathered by this time about the vagrant, the boy and the policeman.

The policeman fetched out a nickel and asked the crowd if they would chip in something. A few did, but the majority wouldn't. There was no great amount of sympathy among them for the starving man. He looked more like an ordinary bum to them. Thirty cents was raised and handed to Joe. The officer decided to help the boy get the human wreck to the restaurant around the corner. After the man had got some food in him he intended to arrest him as a vagrant and take him to the station house. He considered that would be a charity to him. With some difficulty the man was assisted as far as the restaurant and placed before a table.

He ought to have something light like soup," said the policeman to the proprietor, after explaining the outcast's condition.

"We have no soup at this hour," said the restaurant man. "Better let him have a glass of milk and some bread."

Milk and bread were brought, the former being slightly warmed. With trembling eagerness the poor fellow essayed to eat. He made a sad job of it, for the effect of the brandy having passed away, his strength was at a low ebb. He managed to get it all down, however, and then he felt somewhat better, but was in no condition to walk unassisted. The policeman remained on the corner, waiting for Joe to bring him out. The man seemed to regard Joe as his good Samaritan, and expressed his gratitude to him for what little he had done.

"I suppose you have no home?" said the boy.

"None—none," whispered the man wearily.

"Neither have I. I'm out on the world like yourself, and only I found a quarter in a gutter an hour ago, I should be half starved myself at this moment," said Joe.

The derelict seemed surprised at the boy's confession, though he could easily see that Joe did not look at all prosperous.

"Are you really a vagrant, too?" he said. "You look too bright and honest to be adrift, like myself. You may not believe it, but I am a rich man's son. My father is a Wall Street broker. I wouldn't be in this predicament, but a few years after my mother's death my father married again—a designing woman who had a son of her own. She disliked me from the first, and aimed to displace me in favor of her son. She gradually secured a controlling influence over my father, and made life miserable in every way for me. It naturally led to a run-in between us, my father took sides with her, and I left the house."

"What's your name?"

"Richard."

"I mean your last name."

"That is a secret which shall die with me."

At that point the policeman, who had grown impatient, came walking in.

"Well, how are you feeling now?" he asked the vagrant.

"A little better."

"Come here, young man," said the cop to Joe, taking him aside. "I want you to help me get him to the station house, three blocks from here."

"Station house!" said the boy. "Do you intend to lock him up?"

"Yes."

"On what charge? He hasn't done anything."

"He's a vagrant, and my orders are to run them in wherever I come across them."

"I wouldn't add more disgrace to the poor fellow. He's the son of a Wall Street broker."

"He is!" exclaimed the cop incredulously. "What are you giving me?"

"The truth. He has just been giving me an outline of his story, and how it came about that he had to leave his home."

"What's his name?"

"He would only tell me his first one, which is Richard."

The policeman went to the table and asked the derelict several questions. The vagrant would only answer one of them. Then it was that the officer's sharp eye saw a Yale College emblem attached to the derelict's vest.

"Were you ever at college?" he asked him.

"Yes."

"Was it Yale?"

"How did you guess it?" said the man, in surprise.

"You have the emblem on your vest."

A flush spread over the vagrant's white face.

"Come, now, let me have your name and I'll send you to the hospital instead of taking you to the station as a vagrant."

"No. I cannot disgrace my father, for my name would be printed in the newspapers. To the world I am simply Richard Doe, outcast."

The policeman decided to call an ambulance and went to send the call in.

"I thank you for saving me from the Island," said the derelict, gratefully to Joe. "Though, on the whole, I feel that wouldn't greatly matter, for I shall die in a few hours, anyhow."

"Don't talk about dying. They'll fix you up all right at the hospital, and when you get out you can make a fresh start."

"No, I won't live long, I feel certain. I'll never leave the hospital alive. Before I go there I want to know your name, and whatever you chose to tell about yourself."

Joe told him his name, and gave him an outline of his rocky career since the death of his mother.

"You've had a hard time of it, Duncan, about as hard as I've had. It will surprise you to know that though reduced to starvation I have carried about on my person the keynote of a fortune."

"A fortune!" exclaimed Joe.

"Yes. Represented by three copper cents."

"A fortune represented by three copper cents! How do you make that out?"

"It is impossible for me to explain the matter now. There is a mystery about the cents which I have not been able to unravel else the fortune might already be in my possession and I would not now be a homeless outcast."

The derelict fumbled in the inside pocket of

his vest and drew forth a small chamois-skin bag, tied with a chamois thong. He opened it and told Joe to hold out his hand. The boy did so and three large, old-fashioned copper cents fell out on his palm. Some one had cut the Roman "I" on one, the figure "II" on another and the figure "III" on the third. There were no other markings on them.

"Is the mystery connected with those Roman numerals?" Joe asked.

"Yes. I know that much, but it is all I have been able to discover. They form the key of the riddle. I have studied them over, yet I can't make head nor tail of the matter."

"I don't wonder if that is all you have to go by."

At that moment the clang! clang! clang! of the ambulance reached their ears.

"Here comes the ambulance for you," said Joe, handing him back the cents.

The derelict returned them to the bag, tied it up again, and held it out to the boy.

"Take them and keep them as a legacy from me, Duncan," he said. "Don't part with them under any circumstances. Remember, they represent a fortune, though you may never wrest the secret from them. But don't give up trying to solve the mystery of the numerals, for when you least expect it you may light upon their hidden meaning. Were it not that I feel I have scarce forty-eight hours' life in me, I would not part with them. Keep them, anyway, in remembrance of me—of a vagrant like yourself. And now good-by!" he said, as the surgeon entered the restaurant.

They clasped hands, these two derelicts of society, attracted to each other by a common bond, and then the vagrant son of a millionaire Wall Street stock broker, and the rightful heir to at least a part of that trader's wealth, was led out and placed in the wagon and driven away.

CHAPTER III.—The Three Coppers Take Wings, But Are Recovered.

Joe followed the poor fellow outside, holding the chamois-skin bag in his hand, and watched the ambulance drive away. He wasn't aware that he had become an object of interest to two men—sailor-looking chaps, though their attire had little in common with the sea. They had been seated at the table behind Joe and the derelict and had overheard enough of the conversation relative to the three copper cents to make them exceedingly curious about the coins. They followed Joe outside and crowded up against him as the ambulance turned the corner and disappeared. Then one of them snatched the bag out of his hands and both started on the run down the block. The boy was taken so by surprise that for a moment he stood rooted to the spot. Then, seeing the two flying men, he surmised they had stolen the bag between them, under the impression that it contained something of real value. So he dashed after them at full speed.

It was now after eight and the tenement district was pretty full of life, in spite of the cold. As a result, Joe began to experience some difficulty in keeping the two men in sight. Finally

they turned a corner and he lost sight of them. When he reached the corner himself he could find no trace of them. As it was impossible for him to tell just where to look for them, he felt all at sea.

"What shall I do?" he ejaculated.

Then it occurred to him to ask one or more of the boys in the street if they had noticed two men run into any place in the block. This he did, and the first boy he approached on the subject said the two men had gone into McQuillan's saloon. That very ordinary groggery was a short way from the corner, and Joe was soon in front of it. He peered through the half-open door and saw several men in the place, but none looked like the parties he was in search of. Then he ventured in and asked the barkeeper where the two men were who came in a few minutes before.

"Do you mean Hogan and Hughes?" asked the bartender.

"Yes," said Joe, at a venture.

"They went into the little back room. If you're going in there, you'd better take these two whiskies with you and save me the trouble."

Joe took the glasses, in sheer desperation, for he was afraid to refuse, and carried them into a passage in the rear, off which two doors opened, one on either side. He listened, and through one of the doors came the sounds of men's voices. He applied his eye to the keyhole and saw the men seated at a table, on which lay the chamois-skin bag, examining the three copper cents. The result seemed to be disappointing to them.

"I guess this is where we fooled ourselves," said Hogan.

"Looks like it," said Hughes.

"I guess I had better go to the bar and get our drinks," said Hogan; "it looks as though the bartender had forgotten us."

Hughes dropped the bag carelessly into his side pocket, the end of it sticking out, and the two men got up. Joe had placed the two glasses on the floor in front of the door while listening to the talk inside the room. Not wishing the men to catch him there, he opened the door opposite and darted into a large closet containing brooms, mops, buckets and other things. He held the door ajar, intending to slip out after the men as they walked into the barroom. As the men came out into the passage there was a crash of glass. Hughes, who was in advance, had stepped on the two tumblers and crushed them.

"What in blazes was that?" he exclaimed, turning around with his back to the door, behind which Joe stood.

Remembering that the bag was in the man's right-hand pocket, Joe was quick-witted enough to reach out and feel for it. His fingers encountered it at once, and grasping the exposed end, he yanked it out of Hughes' pocket without that chap being a bit the wiser.

"What's the matter?" asked Hogan.

"That's what I want to know," growled Hughes. "I stepped on something that sounded like glass."

They started for the bar, and Joe knew that their demand for two more whiskies would lead to an argument with the bartender, in which the two men would learn that the drinks had been sent in to them by a boy who had come in from the street and asked for them. They would suspect that the boy was the one they had robbed

of the three copper cents, and would wonder why he had not entered the room and demanded his property back. Then if Hughes noticed that the bag was missing from his pocket, he would certainly return to the entry to see what had become of it. Under these circumstances, Joe judged it wise to get away while he had a chance.

So he went to the back part of the hallway, opened the back door, which led to a yard in which there was a gate. Opening this, he found himself out upon the street.

CHAPTER IV.—Joe Gets a Job.

Joe felt a whole lot of satisfaction in getting his three copper cents back, and he determined to keep a sharp eye on them in the future. He placed the bag in an inner pocket of his vest and pinned it there. He hadn't gone far before he saw a sign hanging at the door of a small junkshop, "Boy Wanted." Here was a chance for a job. He walked in and looked around for the boss. Soon he espied him sitting by an old stove in the corner. The Italian arose and asked Joe what he wanted. Joe told him about the sign outside, and after looking at Joe for a while he told Joe what he paid, and the boy accepted the job. Thus Joe started in to make himself useful to the Italian junkshop man.

The first job he was put at was sorting bottles into groups and packing each kind in a box by itself and putting the boxes of each variety on top of each other. Then he was set at sorting out old iron, throwing the large pieces in one heap and the scraps in another. While he was engaged at this the boss came to him, handed him fifteen cents and told him to get his dinner and get back as soon as he was through.

"Let-a me see, you no give-a you-a name," said the Italian.

"Joe Duncan."

The Italian repeated it and then told him to run along. When Joe got back after having had a plate of beef stew and a cup of coffee, he continued his work in good spirits, for two meals in succession at a restaurant was a pleasing novelty to him. He worked steadily at one thing or another and appeared to be well satisfied with his efforts. Men, women and boys came in all day at intervals to sell junk. After dark two hard-looking men entered the shop and called the Italian aside.

They showed him something that glittered under the lamplight. Joe saw the sparkle and wondered what it was. The proprietor took the men into a back room after telling Joe to keep a sharp eye on the shop. Hardly had they got out of the way when a woman came in and Joe asked her if she had something to sell.

"Faith, I have not. You dale in joonk here, and I came in to see if yez had an ould second-hand flatiron yez could let me have chape," she said.

"Yes, we have a number," said Joe, who remembered seeing several in a box in a corner.

"Let me see the best yez have," said the woman, who had nothing but a shawl thrown over her head and shoulders to protect her from the cold.

"I'll go and fetch a couple," said the boy.

He went over to the corner. As he stooped over the box containing the flatirons, a flash of light struck on his eye. It came through a small knot-hole in the partition which separated the shop from the room where the Italian had taken the two men. Instinctively, Joe looked through it and he saw his boss and the men standing close by inside, under a lighted lamp. The Italian held a magnificent brooch, studded and bordered with gems, in his hand.

"No, we didn't pinch it," said one of the men. "We found it. Didn't we, Jim?"

"Of course we did. After the lady's carriage drove away we saw it lyin' in the gutter. Findin's is keepin's, so we're goin' to sell it for what we kin git for it. I reckon it's worth five hundred dollars."

"How you know-a da stones are da real t'ing, eh? I no judge; but dey look-a much-a like-a paste."

"Nonsense!" said the first man. "Them stylish women what comes a-slummin' don't wear no paste. The lady was one of the nob's."

"What you take-a for it?"

"Two hundred dollars. That's like givin' it away."

"What you t'ink I'm made of, mon'? I give-a you \$100. All I got-a in da world. If I make-a fifty out of da deal dat suit-a me."

"Why, you confounded fool, you want all the profit. That thing will be advertised in the morning paper, and maybe \$500 will be offered for its return. If it wasn't that we've reasons which prevent us from collectin' a reward, we wouldn't have brought it to you. If you won't cough up \$200, we'll try somebody else."

"All-a right. You take it to do pawnshop up da block, maybe he give-a you two hundred. I pay not a cent-a more dan one-fifty."

The Italian knew the two crooks would not go to the pawnshop, otherwise they would not have come to him.

"Do you want it, or don't you?" said the first crook.

"I take-a it and give-a you one-fifty."

"Produce, then."

"You walk-a outside. I go upstairs and find-a da mon'."

The crooks started for the door and Joe thought it time to pick up a couple of the flatirons to show the woman.

"Were yez makin' thim flatirons, that it took yez so long?" she said to him ironically.

"No, ma'am. Those two are the best."

"Are they, now? Sure nayther of thim is any great shakes. What do yez ask for this one?"

Joe had no idea what the Italian would ask for it, but as he knew they were reckoned as little better than old iron, he said she could have it for a dime.

"A dime, is it? Faith, it would be chape at half the price. Well, here's your dime. Good-day to yez!" and off she went.

Joe returned to the job he was on, but his mind was on the jeweled brooch, which he was sure was worth a great deal of money—two or three times as much as his boss had arranged to pay for it. When the Italian came back he handed the crooks the \$150 in a corner, and they went

away. Then Joe told his boss he had sold a flatiron for a dime.

"You sold-a too cheap, but it make-a no mat'. How you like-a eat now?"

Joe thought he'd like it all right, so he got a dime and hied himself to the restaurant and had coffee and rolls. It was seven o'clock when he got back to the junk shop. The Italian appeared to be in excellent humor.

"Want to take-a in a moving pic' show?" he said, with a grin.

"Can't afford such a luxury," replied Joe.

"No cost you cent-a. I pay-a your way," and he offered the boy a nickel.

"Much obliged," said Joe.

"You welcome. Find-a place on da Bowery. When you come-a back knock-a on door, so," and the Italian illustrated by giving three knocks and, after a pause, two more. "You understand?"

"Sure," said Joe, and he walked out of the shop.

CHAPTER V.—Joe Carries the Banner.

It was a great luxury to Joe to be able to go to even a cheap moving picture show, and he made his way to the Bowery with some alacrity, but when he finally stood in front of a gaudy picture "palace," he looked at his nickel and hesitated to blow it in on an hour's amusement. While he was hesitating in front of the door, a sporty-looking man, with a cheap and flashy watch chain across his vest, a silk hat and a long, black mustache, came out of the inner door. He held a thick rattan in his hand and the first thing he did was to chase the kids away from the entrance, laying the cane about their legs.

Then pointing at the posters on either side of the entrance, in turn, he began to treat the moving throng on the sidewalk to a flowery description of what could be seen inside for a nickel. Two sailors from the navy, a young man and three boys were enticed inside. During his bit of oratory he had taken Joe in from head to foot. Taking a breathing spell, he beckoned the boy forward.

"Want a job, young fellow?"

"What doing?" asked Joe.

"I'll give you a quarter if you carry a banner up and down this block for an hour, and you can see the second show for nothing on top of it."

Joe jumped at the offer.

The "banner" was similar in form and construction to the transparencies, with a stick descending from the center, one sees carried, with a lamp inside, in political processions, only it was much narrower. Joe carried the banner for an hour and ten minutes and then reported to the proprietor of the show.

"Here's your pay. If you report at seven tomorrow night I'll take you on again," he said, handing the boy the promised quarter. It was after eleven when he got back to the junk-shop. The place was closed and Joe proceeded to give the five raps. After an interval the door was opened on a crack.

"Dat you, Joe?" asked the Italian.

"Yes."

The chain was let down, the door was opened,

and he walked in. The shop was warm and comfortable, though the stove had been fixed for the night, and Joe thought how different things were than in the stable where he shivered under the straw in the loft.

Joe slept on a cot that night, and slept well. He was up early next morning and went up the street to get his breakfast. On his way back to the shop he picked up a morning newspaper that a man cast away, and his thoughts, reverting again to the valuable brooch, which his boss had come into possession of, he looked over the "Lost and Found" column to see if it was advertised for. He saw the following:

"\$500 Reward for information leading to the recovery of a diamond and ruby incrustated brooch, lost either on the stairs or landings of No. 335 — street, or on the sidewalk outside the building, yesterday afternoon, about 4 o'clock; no questions asked. Communicate with George Blakeley, No. — Wall Street, New York. Phone 0000 Wall."

Joe tore the advertisement out of the paper and put it in his pocket.

I suppose the boss will answer that and gather in the \$500, making a clear profit of \$350," he said to himself. "Gosh, how easy some people can make money, while others can't get the chance to make a cent!"

His first job of the day was sorting out more bottles, which had come in during the previous day, after which he was given other things to do. He performed his work with the same industry he had shown on the previous day, and the Italian was more than ever satisfied that he had got hold of a prize package in the boy. About ten o'clock the Italian told Joe he was going out on business and directed him to keep a bright eye on things generally. He was told to tell all persons who brought junk for sale to come again in an hour or take their stuff somewhere else.

He had been gone about a quarter of an hour when the two crooks came in and asked for him.

"He's gone out on business," Joe told them.

"Where did he go?" one of them asked.

"He didn't tell me where he was going, but he said he'd return in about an hour."

The two crooks left the place. Picciano, the Italian, returned about eleven. He had called on two or three Maiden Lane jewelers, shown them the brooch, which he admitted he had found on the street, and asked the value of it. The people he saw did not like his looks, nor did they have much confidence in his story, and one and all refused to place any value on the bit of jewelry. In the end the junk-shop proprietor returned to his place of business greatly disappointed and out of humor. Having seen the ad, he decided to claim the reward and return the article to the man who advertised for it.

CHAPTER VI.—Joe Visits Broker Blakeley.

The day passed away as the previous one had, and Joe finally went to supper. While he was eating his frugal meal of coffee and rolls, he looked wistfully at the piece of apple pie ordered

by a man who sat opposite to him at the same table, and debated with himself whether he should take a nickel from his small fund of twenty cents. He would not have hesitated had he been certain of earning another quarter that evening on the Bowery.

Suddenly he remembered the thirty cents which was collected from the crowd on the previous morning to provide a meal for the starving young man. He had not expected a cent of it, for the restaurant keeper had not asked to be paid for the milk and bread he furnished the vagrant at the request of the policeman. Joe put his fingers in his vest pocket and found the money there. As it was out of the question to think of returning the contributions to the donors, Joe appropriated it to his own use. Being worth fifty cents, he ordered the pie and ate it with great satisfaction.

He hurried back to the shop, intent on getting away at once and hurrying up to the moving picture palace on the Bowery. The Italian, however, dashed cold water on his plans by telling him that he had use for his services that evening. Joe was much disappointed, and asked what he was to do. Picciano looked him over reflectively and then told him that they were going out together. The boy wondered what use his boss was going to put him to. Of course he couldn't guess, and he judged he had better not make any inquiries on the subject. The shop was locked up and they started off together. Their course took them to Chatham Square, whence they walked into Baxter street. Entering a clothing store kept by one Snyder, Picciano said he wanted a decent but cheap suit of clothes for Joe. Snyder produced a suit in no time and Joe was sent into a back room to try it on. It fitted him first-rate, and when Snyder saw how well he looked in it he mentally tacked on another hundred per cent. to his price. The Italian looked Joe over approvingly.

"How much you ask for da suit?" he said.

"That suit stands me in \$18. How much will you give for it?" said Snyder, with a slight German accent.

The Italian felt of the cloth again, turned Joe around and said:

"I give-a you six-a dollar."

"Six dollars!" gasped Snyder. "Say, do you think I'm in business for my health? That suit is worth fifteen dollars. I'll let you have it for twelve."

Picciano shook his head.

"No pay-a so much," he said, and it was clear he meant it, so Snyder, after insisting that the suit was a bargain at \$12, came down to \$10, which was about what he expected to get for it.

"Take-a da suit off, Joe. We go else-awhere."

"Hold on!" said Snyder. "Sooner than lose the sale, I'll let it go for nine-fifty."

"Take-a da suit off," to Joe.

The boy started for the back room.

"Say, you want to get something for nothing," said Snyder angrily to the Italian. "Maybe you want that suit for \$9?"

Picciano didn't want it for \$9, so Snyder reluctantly agreed to make the price \$8.50, which he declared was the same as giving it away. So Joe was called back and the Italian bought the suit. Joe was treated to a second-hand soft hat at a cellar place on the Bowery, and then they

boarded an elevated train bound north. They sat in a corner of the car by themselves and then Joe discovered why he had been treated to his improved clothes. Picciano, unaware that the boy knew about the diamond and ruby brooch and how it came into his possession, proceeded to tell him that he had found the brooch on the sidewalk in front of the tenement, and believing it would be advertised for, had watched the morning papers for an advertisement referring to it.

This advertisement, he said, had appeared, offering a reward of \$500 for information that would lead to the return of the brooch. The Italian went on to say that the advertisement had given the gentleman's business address in Wall street, together with his name, George Blakeley, but as he preferred doing the business in a more private way, he had looked up Mr. Blakeley's home address in the city directory, and Joe was to call there. They got out of the train at the station nearest to the broker's house, which was on Madison avenue, and walked over to the block. So the boy, with some misgivings as to the result of the affair, mounted the tall stoop of the brownstone front and rang the bell. In a few minutes a maid opened the door.

"Is Mr. George Blakeley in?" Joe asked.

"He is," replied the servant.

"I should like to see him on a matter of some importance."

"Does he know you?"

"He does not."

"What is your name?"

"Joseph Duncan."

"Step in, and I will take your name to him."

Returning to Joe, the maid told him to follow her. Joe did so, and was shown into a finely furnished room, fitted with a series of sectional bookcases, a desk, a handsome rug, several leather-upholstered chairs, a small, polished table, and many other things. The boy found himself in the presence of Mr. Blakeley, who asked him what he could do for him.

"I called in reference to your advertisement in the paper this morning, offering a reward of \$500 for the return of a valuable brooch lost in — street yesterday afternoon by a lady who visited one of the tenements there," said Joe.

The broker was all attention at once.

"Did you find the article in question?" asked Mr. Blakeley, looking at him hard.

"No, sir. The man I work for says he found it, and sent me here to return it and collect the reward."

"You have brought the brooch?"

"Yes, sir."

"Let me have it."

Joe handed him the paper, which he opened and found the lost brooch.

"That is the brooch, and I will pay the reward as I agreed to do. It is true I said no questions would be asked, but I would like to ask you one or two. If you prefer not to answer them, you are not obliged to."

"I have no objection to answering any fair question, sir."

"Well, as my advertisement did not mention the fact that this brooch was lost by a lady, how do you know that a lady lost it? And how do you know that she was visiting a tenement in — street?"

"I heard one of the men who brought it into our shop tell my boss that they found it in the gutter opposite No. 335 — street, after the lady's carriage drove away."

"I understood you to say a moment ago that your employer found the brooch and sent you here with it to collect the reward."

Joe flushed.

"I admit I did say that my boss said he found it. He told me that he did."

"I judge from your subsequent remark about one of the men whom you said brought the brooch into your shop that your employer did not find it."

"He did not," admitted Joe reluctantly.

"How came your employer to get possession of it?"

"The men offered to sell it to him, and he bought it."

"I suppose he expected to sell it for a much higher price, but, seeing my advertisement, concluded that the difference between \$150 and \$500 represented a satisfactory profit to him, eh?"

"I suppose so," replied Joe, moving uneasily in his seat.

"Young man, you look to me like an honest boy, and you have answered my questions without evasion, so I won't ask you any more. Ah! one more—how long have you been working for your employer?"

"Two days."

"Is that all?" exclaimed the broker, in some surprise. "What kind of business is it?"

"A junk-shop."

Mr. Blakeley stared at Joe in astonishment.

"May I ask what you do there?"

"Sort bottles, old iron and all kinds of junk."

"Do you like the work?"

"I can't say that I do, but beggars can't be choosers. It's the first regular job that came my way since my mother died, and I was thrown out on the street with hardly a cent in my pocket," said the boy earnestly.

The broker regarded Joe with a new interest.

"How long have you been on your own resources?" he asked.

Joe told him, and added an outline of his hard-luck experience.

"Well, here is my business card. Call on me at my office as soon as you can, and perhaps I may be able to do something for you. Now," taking a pocket checkbook from one of the pigeon holes of his desk, "what is your employer's name?"

"Giovanni Picciano."

"He is an Italian, then?"

"Yes, sir, and a pretty tough-looking one, too. I guess he was afraid to call on you about the reward, that's why he sent me."

"Very likely," replied the broker, making out the check to the Italian's order.

He handed it to Joe, and the boy rose to go. As he did so his eyes fell on a large glass paperweight, on the bottom of which was pasted a photograph of a fine-looking young man. Joe gave a gasp, for the face was the duplicate, allowing for the change incident to a year's hard experience, of the vagrant from whom he had received the three copper cents.

CHAPTER VII.—Joe's Discovery—Trouble at the Junk-Shop.

"What's the matter?" asked the broker, observing the boy's stare.

"I—I was looking that picture."

"That's the photograph of my son," said the gentleman, with a trace of emotion in his voice.

"Is his name Richard?"

"Yes. Have you met him?" asked the broker, in surprise.

"I don't know, but I think so."

"Where? He left home about a year ago, after a misunderstanding with me, and I have not seen him since. I have advertised at intervals, asking him to communicate with my lawyer. If he saw the personals he has taken no notice of them. Do you think you could put me on his track? I will reward you liberally for any information you can give me concerning his present whereabouts," said Mr. Blakeley eagerly.

"You really want to see him?" said Joe.

"I do, Heaven knows."

"The story I told you about my own hard luck is very similar to the experience your son has been up against during the last few months. Yesterday morning I met him for the first time—a starving wreck upon a street in the slums."

"Great heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Blakeley, in a shocked tone.

"I helped get him to a near-by restaurant, where he was given some milk and bread, that being the only food it was thought prudent for him to take. The policeman sent for an ambulance, and while it was on the way your son told me a few things about himself. Then he was taken to a hospital."

"What hospital?" asked the broker eagerly.

"I don't know, but it must have been a downtown one."

"Such a case as that would probably be taken to Bellevue. My poor boy!"

He reached for the telephone on his desk.

"I had better go now, sir," said Joe. "My boss is probably very impatient over the long stay I've made here. He will suspect something is wrong, and he might accuse me of queering the business he sent me about."

"How can he, when you have the check?"

"At any rate, he'll think I was a long time getting it."

"You can say I kept you," said the broker, pushing a button. "Now don't forget to call at my office. If this poor fellow at the hospital is really my son, as I believe he is, I shall want to reward you for putting me on his track."

"All right, sir. I will call," said Joe.

As Joe passed out of the room he heard Mr. Blakeley ask, through the phone, to be connected with Bellevue Hospital. Joe had been nearly an hour in the house, and the Italian awaited his exit with growing impatience and not a little uneasiness. He stood leaning against the post of a flight of steps on the opposite side of the street.

At last he saw Joe come out and run down the steps. The boy hurried across the street to meet him.

"Per bacco! Why you so long, eh? You got-a da mon'?"

"I got a check," replied Joe, as they hurried down the street.

When they reached the elevated station Picciano studied the check over carefully. By the time the downtown train came along he was satisfied it was all right and recovered his spirits. He had made a profit of \$350 on the transaction and he felt pretty good over his luck. He was satisfied that Joe was the only boy he could have depended on to put the business through in good shape.

"You ver' good-a boy. You make-a da bus' first-rate. I tell-a you what, I raise-a your pay to four dol' next-a week. You keep-a da suit and hat. I make-a you present of dem. I no bad-a boss, eh?" with a grin.

"You're all right," replied Joe, with certain mental reservations.

"I bet you. You stay with me, I teach-a you da bus'. Three, four year from now you get-a your own shop, den you make-a da big mon' yourself."

In due time they reached the junk-shop and the Italian opened the door. They walked in and made things fast on the inside. The fire was low and had to be fixed for the night. Joe attended to it while his boss passed through into the back room and went upstairs to his private quarters above. Suddenly the boy heard a muffled cry for help and sounds that indicated a struggle. They reached him through the rear door, which the Italian had left open.

"I wonder what's wrong upstairs?" thought Joe, dashing into the back room and then stopping to listen.

The sounds had stopped and he paused irresolutely.

"Something must have happened upstairs," he said. "I think it's my duty to go up and see."

He immediately started up the stairs in the dark. He had never been up in the boss's quarters before. There was a small landing at the head of the flight from which a door opened into the single, dirty and meagerly furnished apartment occupied as a living and sleeping room by the junk-shop man. Joe, however, knew nothing about the lay of the upper region.

As he reached the top of the stairs he received a staggering blow alongside the head from a fist which he didn't see in the darkness, and he fell backward down the flight, at imminent risk of breaking his neck, or at least a leg or arm. By great good fortune he escaped such a fate and rolled to the foot of the stairs in a heap, where he lay, half stunned. The person who had struck him listened to hear sounds from him, and, none reaching his ears, he came to the conclusion that the fall had put the boy down and out. He returned to the room where his companion was searching the motionless body of the Italian, whose rascally countenance looked ghastly in the lamplight. Had Joe looked into the room at that moment, he would have recognized the men as the two crooks who had sold the brooch to the junk-shop man.

"I've found \$16 and a check for \$500 on him," said the fellow who was rifling the victim.

"A check for \$500," said the other. "I'll bet he got that from the man who advertised for the brooch. He offered a reward of \$500 in the paper."

"No doubt about it," said the first crook.

"Do you think we can cash it?"

"Rather doubtful. We can't count on it. In case this fellow should not happen to live after the blow I gave him, if we signed his name on the back of the check no one would know that the signature was a forgery."

"He looks next door to a corpse now. You must have broken his skull."

"If I did, that'll settle him. Now we'll go through his things. Did you fix that boy for keeps?"

"I reckon so. I knocked him down the entire flight. That's enough to break his neck. He didn't make a move or utter a cry after he reached the bottom."

"I guess you settled him, then," said the first crook.

The men, with the aid of the lamp, proceeded to search the Italian's effects. They tossed things around and peered into every corner of the room and the chest of drawers, without finding the money they believed was hidden there.

"The scoundrel certainly has money. I wonder where he keeps it?" said the first crook.

"I guess he's got a hiding-spot under the floor. We must look for a loose board."

They hunted the room all over, but not a loose board nor even a hole in the corners did they find. In the meanwhile, Joe recovered his scattered senses and pulled himself together. Sitting up, he was conscious that he had received a number of cuts and bruises through his fall. He felt pretty sore and shaky when he stood up, and was very thankful that his head had escaped serious injury. He heard the two men moving around in the room above, and he knew that more than one rascal had got into the building while he and his boss were absent. He was satisfied that they had done up the Italian, and were having things their own way. He knew that he could not tackle two or three men single-handed, and he had no doubt they were desperate ruffians from the way one of them had handled him in the darkness.

"I was a fool to rush up the way I did. They couldn't help hear me coming. All they had to do was to lie in wait for me to reach the top and then hand it to me, which they certainly did, with a vengeance. The only thing I can do is to run out on the street and tell the first person I meet what is going on."

Then it occurred to Joe that he might take off his shoes, creep up and see who the rascals were upstairs, that he might be able to identify them subsequently. It was a risky thing to do, but Joe was a plucky boy, and was willing to take chances. So off came his shoes, and up he went, as silent as a mouse. The door of the room was partly ajar, and the light that came through the opening showed him the landing. Glancing in at the door, he saw two men in the room, and he recognized them as the two crooks. He was not greatly surprised, for he remembered the visit they had paid the shop that morning.

Joe's hand coming in contact with the door, he felt the key in the lock. At once it occurred to him to shut the door and lock it from the outside. He acted at once on the suggestion, then he hurried downstairs, put on his shoes and went to the street door, which he unbolted and let down the

chain. It was about eleven o'clock, and the shops were closed, but lights blazed in two groggeries up the block. There were also men in sight. Had the weather not been so cold, there would have been more evidence of life in the locality. Joe did not believe it would do any good to visit the saloons in search of help, and as he had no idea where he would find a policeman, he hesitated what to do. At that moment he heard a crash behind. The door he had locked on the crooks had been forced by them.

Not knowing where they had entered the building, he could not tell where they intended to make their exit. With the club in his hand which he had snatched up on his way to the street door, he crept back into the rear room. Then it was he noticed that the back window was open. In his excitement he had not observed that fact before.

"That's where they expect to escape," he thought.

Down the stairs rushed the rascals. Only one of them could get out of the window at a time. As the fellow in advance was letting himself out, Joe rushed forward and laid out the other with a heavy blow. Unaware that his companion had been struck down, the first crook waited outside for his pal to follow him. When he didn't, he sprang up halfway, and, poking his head in, called to him to hurry up. Joe swung his club with such effect that the other crook fell back, stunned, into the narrow yard.

CHAPTER VIII.—The Fire.

Joe looked out of the window and saw the rascal stretched out there without movement.

"I've got them both. Gosh, I never thought I'd be able to head them off. I must tie them up before they recover their senses," he said.

There was rope of all kinds, plenty of it, in the room, and Joe, first lighting the lamp, proceeded to tie the legs and arms of the chap in the room. Having accomplished this to his satisfaction, he sprang out of the window and tied the other crook securely. Joe wasn't prepared for the surprise that awaited him when he hauled himself back through the window. The heretofore dark landing above was lighted up far brighter than any lamp could have illuminated it. He saw a bright-red glare reflected on the wall that could only mean one thing—the room above was on fire. Either through accident or design, the crooks had set fire to the room above. Joe gazed upward in consternation.

"I believe those rascals fired the building on purpose," he said.

He was about to make a dash for the street to give the alarm when he remembered that his boss was up there, either dead or unconscious. He must save him first and then give the alarm. Dashing up the stairs, he was met by smoke rolling out into the landing. Rushing in, he saw that the bed was on fire, and that the flames had already spread to the woodwork around it. He gave a gasp when he saw that the Italian had been placed on the bed by the rascals to insure his destruction, lest he might prove a witness against them in the event of his recovering from the effect of the blow he had received when they took him by surprise in the dark.

It was no easy matter to rescue the senseless Italian from the burning bed, though he was not a heavyweight by any means. Joe, however, intended to do it at whatever risk to himself. Pushing through the smoke, he reached the bed, grasped Picciano around the body and lifted him off his fiery couch. Then, half blinded by the smoke, he staggered out on the landing. Taking a fresh grip on his boss, he dragged him downstairs, and out into the shop as far as the street, where he laid him on the floor. He dashed down the street to the nearest saloon and, opening the door, yelled "Fire!" at the crowd within. His shout caused a sensation, and a rush for the door took place.

"Where's the fire?" asked the first man out, seeing no sign of such a thing.

"Over the rear of the junk-shop. Somebody send in the alarm, and the rest follow me."

"How did the place catch? Is it much of a blaze?"

These questions were fired at Joe.

"The two crooks who knocked out the boss and robbed him, set the room on fire."

"Two crooks!" exclaimed a man.

"Yes; but I've got them."

"You have?"

"Yes."

"Where are they?"

"Tied up at the back of the shop."

Joe, heading the crowd of men, reached the open door of the shop.

"There's the proprietor, Picciano. I dragged him here from the burning room."

"How came you to be in the building at the time?" asked one of the men suspiciously.

"I work for Picciano," replied Joe.

"Why, three days ago he told me he was looking for a boy."

"He hired me yesterday morning."

Joe pushed open the door of the rear room and then the crowd, following behind him; saw the glare of the fire reflected down the stairs.

"The place is afire," said one of them, "and I guess it's quite a blaze, too. Hello! Who's this?"

"One of the crooks I captured," said Joe.

"Did you kill him?"

"No; he's only senseless from the rap I gave him on the head. The other chap is in the yard under that open window."

One of the men looked out and saw the fellow.

"He mustn't remain there," he said. "He's liable to be burned up, for this old building is pretty certain to go up."

"I'll jump out and lift him up to you."

Joe did so, and the man at the window, with help from another man, hauled him into the building. When Joe got in himself both crooks had been carried to the street. The Italian was also carried to the other side of the way and propped up against a doorway. By this time the tenement part of the building over the junk-shop had been alarmed by the crowd. The smoke could be distinctly smelled in the hallways, and the tenants came rushing out of their rooms in all stages of undress, notwithstanding the cold of the night. Joe mounted guard over the senseless crooks and kept the curious away from them. This soon proved no easy job, for the rascals had many friends in the neighborhood, and some of them came on the scene with the growing crowd, and when they saw and recognized the two bound

crooks and suspected they were in trouble, they started in to rescue them.

Joe blocked them at once.

"Stand off! Don't crowd up so close," he said.

"Who the blazes are you givin' orders to?" said one tough fellow. "Get away, or I'll slug you!"

"Keep off, I tell you. These men set fire to the building opposite."

"Who says they did?"

"I say so."

"Get out. You don't know what you're talking about."

Three roughs jumped in on Joe and commenced a rough-house scrap, two of them grabbing the bound crooks and starting to drag them away, while the third held on to the boy. Joe struggled desperately and, getting one arm free, punched the fellow a heavy blow in the stomach. The tough doubled up and Joe escaped from him. The boy appealed to the crowd, but nobody felt like butting in, though they could see that the incendiaries were being rescued. Fortunately, a policeman had reached the scene, and seeing the racket, he ran over to ascertain the cause, and Joe shouted to him for help.

In the confusion that ensued one of the crooks was spirited away, but the chief rascal was held on to by Joe, in spite of the clouts he got, until the officer got near enough to take a hand in the proceedings. Then Joe explained that this rascal had, in conjunction with his pal, set the back of the junk-shop on fire and he had captured both of them.

"Where is the other?" asked the policeman.

"He's been carried away by his friends, and I've had all I could do to hang on to this one," replied the boy.

The officer pushed the crowd back and pounded on the pavement for assistance. Joe then called his attention to Picciano, who, he said, was the proprietor of the junk-shop. It was impossible for him to tell the particulars of what had happened, owing to the growing excitement in the street. Smoke was now coming out of the front windows, just above the shop, vacated in a hurry by its tenants. The first engine had just reached the scene, and several more policemen made their appearance. The crook was taken charge of and Joe was directed to go along to make the charge. An ambulance was sent for to carry the Italian to the hospital. The crook recovered his senses on the way and was then forced to walk. When he was lined up before the desk at the station house Joe charged him with knocking out his boss, robbing him, and setting the room on fire. He denied everything. On being searched, Mr. Blakeley's check was found on him, and about \$40 in bills. Joe identified the check as the one he received that evening from the broker for his boss, Picciano.

The crook was at once locked up, and Joe was directed to appear against him next morning in the Tombs police court. When he got back to the scene of the fire he found that it was about out, after having gutted the back part of the shop, the floor above and pretty well damaged the rear of the third floor. The shop was in charge of the fire patrol and Joe couldn't get in there. In fact, there was nothing to take him in there. It was after midnight, and he either had to tramp the streets till morning or go up on the Bowery

and pay fifteen cents for a lodging. Having forty-five cents in his clothes, he chose to do the latter.

CHAPTER IX.—Joe Hired to Go in the Country.

Joe was at the shop early next morning and found a fireman sitting inside the door on guard. He told the man he was employed there by the Italian.

"There'll be no business done here for several days," said the fireman, "so there isn't any use of you hanging around."

With thirty cents between him and vagrancy, Joe went to breakfast. He confined his meal to coffee and rolls. With the Italian in the hospital and the shop out of business, the prospect ahead of Joe was far from encouraging. The twenty cents he had left when he walked out of the restaurant was all he had to live on that day, not to speak of getting a bed for the night.

"My, but I'm up against it as bad as ever," he said. "No, not quite as bad, for I have a pretty good suit of clothes in place of my ragged ones, and a new hat. I'm that much ahead of the game. I have a chance to pick up a decent job now. That reminds me, Mr. Blakeley told me to call at his office as soon as I could and he would see what he could do for me. I might as well call on him to-day. If I told him the scrape I am in now I dare say I could borrow a couple of dollars from him to tide me over, but it goes against my grain to ask for money."

Joe knew there was no use looking for work until after he had attended the police court. He went to the Tombs court at ten o'clock and had to wait there an hour before the crook was brought to the bar. He pleaded not guilty, and then Joe was called on to tell his story. He described everything just as it had happened. Some of the crook's friends were in the court and favored him with mighty black looks. Joe told of the attempt to rescue the two men, and how one of them was carried away in spite of his best efforts.

"I couldn't do much against the crowd," he said to the magistrate. "This man would have escaped, too, if the policeman hadn't turned up just in time to head the chaps off."

The production of the broker's check, made out to the order of the junk-shop man, was the most tangible evidence against the prisoner and the magistrate decided to hold him. When Joe came out on the sidewalk a tough lad walked up to him and said:

"You're goin' to be fixed for appearin' ag'in Jim Starkey."

"All right. Go ahead and fix me," replied Joe pluckily. "I suppose you think that rascal did quite right to knock Picciano out, rob him, and then, after placing him on the bed, set the room on fire so he would be burned up."

"As long as he didn't do anythin' to you, you had no business to butt in."

"Either he or his pal knocked me downstairs and nearly broke my neck. That was doing something to me."

"It didn't hurt you much. You ought to have known enough not to have gone upstairs where you wasn't wanted."

"I guess the check found on Starkey did more to settle his hash than my story."

"You swore that the check belonged to the Dago."

"The check showed that fact on its face, for it was made out in Picciano's name. My swearing to it didn't make a whole lot of difference."

"Well, you're in bad with the gang, and you'll get yours," said the young man darkly, walking away.

"I guess I'd better shake the slums, or I might find myself in the river some night," thought Joe, as he walked into a small lunch house to invest ten cents in a plate of stew and a glass of water.

When he was through he started for Wall Street to call on Broker Blakeley. On his way he noticed the sign of a dealer in old coins. That recalled to his mind what Hughes had said to Hogan in the groggery, that the three copper cents might be worth a fortune on account of their rarity.

"I guess I couldn't do better than to show them to this dealer and ask him what he thinks they're worth," he thought.

He walked upstairs to a narrow, ill-lighted landing and walked into the coin dealer's place of business, which was a room in the rear. An old, gray-headed man came forward.

"I have three old-fashioned copper cents," said Joe. "I'd like to know what they're worth."

"Let me see them and I'll tell you," said the old man, readjusting his spectacles.

Joe took the chamois-skin bag out of his pocket and shook the three cents out on the counter. The man picked them up and gave each a rapid glance.

"They're worth nothing," he said, laying them down.

"No?"

"Nothing," repeated the old man. "In the first place, their dates are not discernible; in the second, they are in bad condition, and, finally, they are defaced by those three numerals. Either of these defects puts them out of the market, supposing they ever had a special value as coins of some rarity. Without dates it is impossible to place them, but even if they bore dates of premium coins their worn and defaced condition would destroy their value. As they stand at this moment those three copper cents are not worth their original face value."

Joe was awfully disappointed, and he looked it. He replaced the coins in the bag, thanked the dealer, and walked out.

"I guess Richard Blakeley must have been dreaming when he told me those three copper cents represented a fortune," mused Joe, as he marched downstairs. "The dealer explained the matter pretty straight, and I see no reason to doubt him. I guess I couldn't spend them if I tried. However, I shan't try. Richard Blakeley told me to keep them in remembrance of him, and I shall do it."

When Joe reached Broker Blakeley's office he found that the trader had not come down at all that day, and had just telephoned that he would not be down.

"Gosh! I see myself without a bed to-night. I'll have to put the night in at the stable, and I thought I was done with that forever. I was congratulating myself that my luck had turned

for the better, but it seems to have turned back again."

Joe felt almost discouraged, and he didn't know what to do. Finally he thought he'd go over to the Pennsylvania ferryhouse and see if he could make something carrying the grips or packages of travelers for them. He had done that off and on and sometimes had earned his supper that way. He forgot that he was dressed much better now than boys were who were compelled to take up with such expedients to earn a subsistence of the barest kind.

Reaching the ferryhouse, he hung around the entrance with other boys, waiting for a train-boat to bring in its quota of passengers. One finally arrived, and a crowd of people came out of the ferry, some of them carrying suitcases and other impedimenta. A gray-haired, country-looking man, with long chin whiskers, appeared with a heavy carpet-bag. Joe, who had tried other people unsuccessfully, tackled him.

"Can I carry your carpet-bag for you, sir? Only a nickel to the elevated station, or a dime to some near point on Broadway, like the Astor House."

"That's where I'm bound, sonny—the Astor House. Show me the way there and I'll give you a dime," said the farmer.

"All right, sir. Let me have your valise. I'll carry it for you."

"How much more for that?"

"No extra charge, sir."

"Well, now, do you mean that?"

"Yes, sir. I need ten cents so bad I'll do anything for it," said Joe.

"Sho! Is that a fact? You don't look as if you needed money very bad," said the farmer, as they crossed West street.

"You mustn't judge by appearances. I'm out on the world, with nothing but ten cents in my pocket and the clothes on my back."

"Are you telling the truth?"

"I am," replied Joe earnestly.

"Can't you get steady work in this big city?"

"I was burnt out of the only steady job I got in months, last night."

"And you lost everything you owned?"

"I didn't own much."

"Well, well! Say, how would you like to work in the country?"

"I don't know. I've never had any country experience."

"I'm looking for a strong, honest and active boy about your size to help me on my farm up-State, on Lake Erie. If you'll come back with me, I'll pay your expenses at the Astor House while I stay here, and when you get to the farm I'll pay you \$10 a month and keep you. If you want to quit at the end of the fall you can. You'll have a matter of \$80 then to make a new start with in the city."

The prospect of earning \$80 in addition to his bed and board was too tempting to be turned down by Bob, and he promptly said he'd take the job.

"I'm real glad you'll come, for I rather like your face. I reckon you're a boy I can depend on, and that's the kind I want to get hold of."

"I'll do my best to suit you."

"That's all I ask. Nobody can do any better than that. Now, what's your name?"

Joe told him and, in turn, learned that the farmer's name was Josiah Wheatley. They got quite well acquainted on the way to the hotel. The farmer signed his name and then Joe's, and asked for two rooms. Two close together on the same corridor were assigned to them. That evening Joe had the swellest meal of his life. He hardly knew how to get away with the bill-of-fare at his disposal, hungry as he was; but he made a brave effort, just the same, and did ample justice to the well-cooked dishes.

"I'd like to go to a show to-night," grinned Farmer Wheatley. "I s'pose you can pick out one that's kind of lively and has some pretty gals in it."

"I haven't kept track of the theaters, Mr. Wheatley. I had no money to visit one, so what was the use? I guess the clerk at the desk can give you a good idea of what is playing at the different houses. Will you ask him, or shall I?"

"I reckon you'd better do it."

"You'd like to see a musical comedy, I suppose, where they have a girl chorus and some dancing, perhaps. Something light and lively."

"That's the ticket. I haven't had any amusement to speak of all winter, 'cept what I could pick up at Parker's store, and that wasn't more'n sittin' around his stove and talking politics, and this year's crop prospects, and such like topics. I came down here on business connected with a legacy left to my wife, and I expect to start back to-morrow afternoon, so I'd like to have one good time while I'm here."

Joe found out that there were musical shows at three leading theaters, and the clerk indicated which, in his opinion, was the best of the three. The boy reported to the farmer, and the agriculturalist said they'd take that one in.

"We'd better start right uptown now," said Joe. "We can get the tickets and have half an hour or so to look around before we go into the theater."

That suited Farmer Wheatley, so they took the Broadway car and started northward. After the farmer got the two tickets in the box office, which were down front in the orchestra and cost him \$2 each, which he thought a pretty stiff price to give for a theater seat, though he didn't begrudge the money, for there was nothing of the miser about him, Joe showed him around the brilliantly lighted Times Square and 42d street as far as Eighth avenue.

They reached their seats just before the rise of the curtain. The show was first-class and suited Farmer Wheatley from the ground floor up. Joe, who hadn't been to a first-class theater for two years, was equally delighted with the performance. The boy slept in a real bed that night for the first time in many months, and he slumbered like a top. A bang-up breakfast next morning completed his happiness, and then he piloted the farmer to the office of a lawyer at 115 Broadway.

He waited outside while his new employer was closeted with the legal gentleman for the best part of an hour. When the interview was over, Farmer Wheatley wanted to go down to the Battery, though that place was at its worst at that time of the year, and Joe took him there. They took in the Aquarium, and afterward Broad and Wall streets. As Joe said he wanted to see Bro-

ker Blakeley, the farmer went with him to that gentleman's office. The broker was down and Joe was admitted to his private room, where he received a warm reception. Mr. Blakeley told him he had found his son at Bellevue in a precarious condition.

It was a question with the doctors whether he would recover under the best care that could be bestowed on him. He told Joe he was very grateful to him for putting him on the track of his son, and started to write a \$500 check to the boy's order. Joe refused to accept, saying that what he had done was more for the young man's sake than for Mr. Blakeley himself.

"Then I will see that you get a situation in some office in the Street," said the broker.

"I have already made arrangements to go out on a farm in the northern part of the State, and it wouldn't be fair for me to go back on the man who has hired me. After a few months' trial of it, if I don't like it, I'll return to the city and call on you to get me a position then, if you care to do it," replied Joe.

"Very well," said Mr. Blakeley. "You may depend on me to do you any favor within my power at any time you make the request. Whether my son recovers or not, I shall always feel under deep obligations to you."

Joe then told him about what had happened at the junk-shop the previous night after he and the Italian returned from uptown, and how the fire had put him out of the job, for which change he was rather grateful, since it had put him in the way of doing a whole lot better.

"Your check is in the hands of the police," he said, "and you had better stop payment on it until you find out that Picciano has recovered. When he was taken to the hospital last night he looked like a dead man."

Joe then took his leave, and after showing Farmer Wheatley some more of the lower part of the city, they returned to the hotel for lunch. Two hours later they took an Erie train at Jersey City and started on their journey northward, but before leaving the farmer purchased a small trunk for Joe and bought him a supply of shirts, underwear and other things that he stood greatly in need of.

CHAPTER X.—On the Wheatley Farm.

On the following morning Joe and the farmer reached the Wheatley farm, which was a fair-sized one, situated along the shore of Lake Erie, close to the tracks of the Lake Shore Railroad. It was well stocked with the usual run of farm animals, and in addition had about fifty head of sheep. The poultry yard was likewise well populated, and there were many ducks, too. Farmer Wheatley had been a tiller of the soil ever since he was old enough to help his father, who owned the property before him. The farm came to him with a good sum of money in bank when his father died, for his mother had preceded her husband by several years, and Josiah was their only child. Wheatley, senior, had been a shrewd and capable farmer, and his son had followed in his footsteps, with great profit. He married a smart and industrious young woman soon after the farm came into his possession, and their united efforts

resulted in an unbroken run of prosperity. Therefore, Farmer Wheatley, at the time Joe Duncan took service with him, was uncommonly well off.

Mrs. Wheatley sized Joe up about the same way her husband did, as a smart, industrious and active boy, who would be a credit to the farm. She assured the new boy that he would be well treated, and said she had no doubt but he would do his duty.

"I'll do the best I can to suit you and Mr. Wheatley," replied Joe. "But you understand that I know nothing about the business, and will have to be shown what to do and how to do it. I've always lived in New York City, but it hasn't done much for me, so I'm glad to try the country for a change."

"Country boys seem to hanker after the life in cities. I'm glad to find one city boy who prefers the country fields and roads to the crowded streets he has been accustomed to," said Mrs. Wheatley. "After you have spent a few months with us, you will be better able to decide in your own mind which life is best suited to a growing boy."

"I've heard you have to get up earlier and work longer and harder than you have to in the city, and that you don't make as much money," said Joe.

"That is quite true," admitted the good woman; "but, nevertheless, the country has its own advantages. You'll grow healthier and stronger here than in New York, and I am sure when you decide to leave us you will not regret having come here."

"I'm sure I won't, ma'am, for I'm bound to say that I like you and Mr. Wheatley, and when I like a person I can't do too much for them."

"That's the way I like to hear a boy talk," said the farmer's wife, beaming upon Joe. "My husband wouldn't have engaged an inexperienced city boy like you if he hadn't taken a fancy to you and felt certain that you would do your duty."

The lady then told her husband to bring the boy's trunk into the kitchen and she would get the back room ready for his occupancy. Farmer Wheatley took Joe all over his farm that morning, and through the barns and other out-houses, explaining many things to him. About noon they were called in to dinner, and then Joe was introduced to a rather pretty girl of fifteen, named Jennie Taylor, who was a poor relation of the Wheatleys, and lived with them, as a maid-of-all-work, on the farm.

It was customary with farmers to hire one man all the year around. Farmer Wheatley had had such a man for several years steady, but on the first of February he received a letter from a law firm in Dublin, Ireland, advising him that he had fallen heir to a small property in his native country, and requesting him to come over to take possession of his legacy. This necessitated his leaving the Wheatley farm, and Joe might be said to have stepped into his shoes. After dinner Farmer Wheatley took Joe into the village, a short distance away, and bought him a working suit, and a few other necessary articles that had been overlooked in New York. On their return he was shown how to take the horse out of the wagon, just as he had previously been shown how to hitch up the team. Then he went to his room, got into his working duds and reported at the

barn ready for business. He and the farmer spent the afternoon mending harness and repairing a plough.

Before and after supper he was given various chores to do. He took hold of everything so willingly, and did his work so well, that the farmer and his wife were both satisfied they had made no mistake in the estimate they had formed of him. Until the middle of March the weather confined Joe's exertions chiefly to indoor work in the barns and other out-houses. He learned to milk and tend to the livestock. His outdoor labor was mostly repairing fences and walls and cleaning up. After the 15th of March he and the farmer spent much of their time for a week or two in the orchard, pruning trees that needed it.

During April, when the frost got out of the ground, Joe was taught to plough, and during the latter part of the month he helped sow clover and other grass. With the coming of May, work began in earnest on the farm in the fields, and Joe began to understand just what farm work was. He had now been three months in his new position and, on the whole, he liked it pretty well. Three square meals a day and a good bed, which he was certain of, made his life in the slums of New York fade gradually from his thoughts. He felt satisfied now that that terrible experience would nevermore be repeated, and it was a great satisfaction to him to feel that he was on the road to a respectable future. He was on excellent terms with the farmer and his wife, and Jennie and he had already become very warm friends. He told her all about his ragged experience in a great city, and she shuddered at the recital, and wondered how he ever could have survived it.

He also showed her the three copper cents and told her how they came into his possession. They examined each coin very carefully together one evening, under the lamplight, but beyond the numeral on each there was nothing about the cents, so far as they could make out, that made them different from any other old defaced coins of their time.

"Seems to me they look pretty thick for copper coins," said the girl; "but, of course, that is the way cents were made in those days."

"Yes, apparently so. I saw an English copper penny of George III's reign once, and it looked as big as a cartwheel, almost. It was more than an inch and a half in diameter and over an eighth of an inch thick on the rim. I imagine that people didn't carry many of them around in their pocket at one time, for a few of them must have weighed a pound. One would imagine that copper was cheap in those days, judging from the size and weight of a single penny coin," said Joe.

"Do you really think that those three Roman numerals form a clue to a fortune?" asked Jennie.

"That's what the broker's vagrant son told me, and he was not in a condition to take pleasure in deceiving me. He seemed to put the utmost faith in that himself, though, college man as he was, the mystery had thoroughly baffled him. To tell you the truth, I think the person he got them from fooled him with some clever yarn. He didn't tell me who he got them from or how he got them, but if they really bore the clue to a fortune it doesn't strike me that anybody would have given

them to him unless, of course, they happened to be dying at the time, as he believed he was when he presented them to me. I have wondered several times whether he died in the hospital or got well under the special care his father saw that he got. I have been tempted to write to his father, whose address I have, but somehow I don't like to. I don't want to learn that he is dead. I'd rather believe that he got well."

With the coming of the month of June, Joe found he had to rise at a quarter of five, the farmer pounding on his door at that hour. He was learning farm work rapidly, for he took an interest in everything he was called upon to do, and his employer was well satisfied with him. The country now looked charming, and Joe infinitely preferred it to the city. He missed the life and excitement of town, but he did not pine after either. He could see the waters of Lake Erie shining in the sun as he worked in the fields, and he liked to look at its sparkling wavelets. Gradually a desire came over him to take a sail on the beautiful lake. The farmer enjoyed water rights along the front of his property, and owned a small sailboat. Joe, however, knew nothing about boat sailing, though he had an idea he could easily master it.

During July and August the farmer hired two and sometimes more extra hands. There were four of these at work in the first week in August, and Joe discovered that one, a young fellow a little older than himself, named Ben Hallman, understood the management of a boat. When Sunday came around Joe suggested that they borrow the sailboat and take a sail after dinner.

"I was going to suggest that myself," said Ben, with alacrity. "You ask Mr. Wheatley if we can have the use of the boat this afternoon."

"I will," said Joe; and he did.

He got permission to take it, and so, after dinner, he and Ben hied themselves to the little landing-place where the boat was moored, boarded her, hoisted sail and started off, with no particular destination in view.

CHAPTER XI.—The Three Spindles.

"Where shall we go—up or down the lake?" asked Ben.

"It's all the same to me," said Joe. "We might first sail out to that little island yonder. It looks like an emerald set in a corrugated silver base."

"That sounds poetical," laughed Ben. "Have you read much poetry?"

"Never read any except what was in my reader at school," replied Joe.

"I guess you have a poetical turn of mind and don't know it. We'll go to the emerald set in a corrugated base of silver. I suppose you mean that the little waves give the surface of the lake a corrugated appearance?"

"That's the idea," nodded Joe. "That's a peculiar-looking rock in the center of the island."

"I noticed that. It looks something like a trident—the three-pronged fork of Neptune—stuck up through the bottom of the island."

It was certainly an odd-looking rock. How Nature could have formed a rock in that shape was a great mystery—but, then, Nature is full of

mysteries of the same order. This particular evidence of her handiwork was a solid rock from which projected upward three elongated thorn-shaped projections, ten or twelve feet high, at equal distance apart. It didn't really resemble a trident, but a three-pronged spearhead. In winter, when the island was bare of verdure, the rock and prongs were prominently visible, but in summer only the prongs were to be seen rising above the thick vegetation. The island was hardly more than a third of a mile offshore, so it did not take the boat long to reach it.

"Let's land and get a closer look at that rock," said Joe.

Ben looked for a suitable spot to bring the boat close enough to land without grounding her nose on the beach. He sailed around to the other side before he discovered a good place. A projecting flat rock furnished an excellent landing place. He ran the boat alongside of it, forward, and told Joe to jump ashore with the mooring-line and tie it to a small tree close by. Joe did so, and then Ben followed, after dropping the sail. The island was a little over 100 feet long by about half that in width at its widest part. Joe led the way toward the odd-shaped rock, and a few steps carried them to it.

A close inspection of the three spindles showed their surface to be rough and uneven, but the space between them seemed surprisingly accurate. Joe and his companion pushed their way through the shrubbery till they got close to the base of the rock itself. Then they saw something that was clearly not the work of Nature. Near the bottom of the first cone was cut the Roman numeral "I"; in the same place on the second cone was the numeral "II", while on the third cone was "III." Joe stared at them with open mouth, so astonished was he at the sight of the marks which corresponded with those on the three copper cents.

"Somebody has taken the trouble to mark those spindles one, two and three," said Ben. "I call that a waste of time and energy."

"I wonder if they mean anything?" said Joe, not a little impressed by the coincidence.

"The marks mean what you see—that on this side this is stone one, this stone two, and that stone three; but the numbering would be reversed if you stood on the other side," said Ben.

"Well, it's mighty funny."

"That's those numerals should be there, eh? Some chap who had lots of time to throw away is responsible for them. There's no accounting for what some people will do."

Joe looked with more than usual curiosity at the numbers, and also to see if he could make out any other marks on the base of the rock, but as far as he could see, there was nothing else cut in the stone. He could not remain there long, as Ben, having seen all he wanted to see, was impatient to re-embark.

As they pushed away from the little island, Joe resolved to return at another time and make a more thorough examination of the rock. During the sail Joe took a lesson in boat-sailing, and he picked up enough to make him feel confident that he could manage the boat under the easy conditions that prevailed that day. That evening he told Jennie about the three numerals that he and Ben had found cut upon the three spindles on the

island. That they should coincide with the numerals on the three copper cents struck the girl as a singular circumstance, though she did not believe there could be any connection between the two.

"You can't tell whether there's a connection or not," said Joe. "The fact that I got the coins in New York doesn't operate against such a supposition, for the person who branded the coins might have been the same person who cut the numerals on those stones."

"Suppose he was, how could stamping the coins afford any clue to that rock?"

"You've got me. The numerals on the rock I discovered by accident, quite independent of the coins. I'd have seen them, anyway, even if I'd never seen or heard of the three copper cents. According to the broker's son, the numerals on the coins in some mysterious way pointed to a fortune. The secret of their meaning, if there really is such a secret, has got to be discovered before the clue to the fortune can be found."

"If it baffled several owners of the coins before they came to you, you are likely to have a difficult job doing any better yourself."

"The broker's son told me to keep at it, and perhaps some time I would get on to it unexpectedly."

Jennie smiled.

"Well, I wish you success, but it's a problem I wouldn't care to worry over."

"Not even for a fortune?" said Joe.

"You haven't any real evidence that they actually mean anything. You have only the statement of the broker's son that they do, and though he might have told you in good faith, it is quite possible he had no evidence of the fact himself."

That ended their interview for that time, for the clock struck nine, and as they had to get up early it was time for them to get to bed. Joe thought quite often of the numerals on the spindles during the week that followed and tried in every way he could to connect them with the duplicate marks on the coins, but the effort was a vain one.

"I wonder if there could be a fortune buried on that island?" he asked himself. "It strikes me those numerals were put on the spindles for some reason other than merely for the purpose of numbering them, since that would have been a ridiculous waste of time. Naturally, when a person buries anything anywhere he would put a mark of some kind to identify the spot, but in the case of the spindles they are sufficiently odd of themselves to furnish all the mark that would be necessary."

Thus reasoned Joe, and the more he thought over the matter, the more perplexing it became to him. After a hard week's work, Sunday came around again, and as it was a fine day, with a light breeze on the lake, he asked Jennie if she would like to visit the island with him.

"Yes. I'd like to go there and see those marks very much," she said. "Can you sail the boat?"

"I can do it well enough to go as far as the island," he said.

"I'm not afraid to go with you, because I can manage the boat myself as well as any man."

"Can you? Then you've got something on me."

"Oh, yes. I took lessons from a young man who spent a part of last summer with us. He

was quite expert at boat sailing. We often went out together in my father's craft, and the young man told me just before he left that I could sail the boat as well as he could himself, which I regarded as quite a compliment."

Jennie finished her work in the kitchen by two o'clock, and in fifteen minutes was ready to accompany Joe to the island. They walked down to the landing and boarded the boat. Joe hoisted the sail and then unmoored, Jennie being seated at the helm. The girl handled the rudder skillfully, though the light wind made little call upon her expertness, and in a few minutes she ran the boat alongside the flat rock and they disembarked. They went at once to the rock and Jennie saw the numerals at the base of each of the spindles.

"Well, what do you think of it? Doesn't it look as if there was some connection between these spindles and the three copper cents?" asked Joe.

"I admit that it does, but I really think it is merely a coincidence," replied Jennie.

Joe made a closer investigation of the big stone and the spindles that day, but got no additional light on the subject that so greatly interested him. Then he and Jennie walked all over the little island, pausing here and there to gather some of the pretty flowers that grew there. As the sun swung around on its downward course the shadows cast by the three spindles lengthened out and merged into a single one that pointed to the east. The young people did not take any notice of this fact, since there was no reason why they should. When they re-embarked and pushed off, the single long shadow fell upon a large stone near the smooth rock at which they had landed. By the time they were well underway for the shore, the shadow passed the stone, broadened out and finally divided itself into three shadows again. This natural phenomena happened every day that the sun shone, but the long, thin shadow, cast by the three spindles, when in direct line with the sun, rested on the stone at a different moment each day.

CHAPTER XII.—The Three Strangers.

One afternoon in the month of August Joe was returning from the village with a supply of groceries in the light wagon. It was close on to sundown, which meant that it was near seven o'clock. Swinging around a turn, the boy discovered three rough-looking men seated on a fallen log by the side of the road. Their faces were heavily tanned and roughened from long contact with the sun and weather, and their hands were of the same hue, coarse and knotty.

They did not look like the hoboos he often saw in that neighborhood, but like men accustomed to life either at sea or on the great lakes. Each had a small bundle knotted to the end of a stick. They got up as the wagon approached and, coming forward, one of them made a sign to Joe to stop. The boy reined in.

"Say, sonny," said the man, in a hoarse voice, "you live 'round here, I guess?"

"Yes—on a farm, yonder, on the lake front," replied Joe.

"Jest so. I guess you know the shore pretty well, up and down, don't you?"

"I can't say that I do. Why?"

"You ought to if you live 'round here. You must have been up and down it for some distance."

"I've only been living here for about five months."

"Is that all?" said the man, looking disappointed. "I thought you was raised hereabouts."

"No. I was raised in New York."

"New York, eh? That's some distance from here. How came you to take to farmin'? Somethin' new for city boys, ain't it?"

"It might be. What do you want to know about the shore?"

"I'd like to find out if there's a small island close to the shore anywhere 'round here. We were told it was near the village of Singleton, and that's where you just come from, I guess."

"A small island?" said Joe, looking hard at the men.

"Yes; not much bigger than a good-sized chaw of terbacker, if you understand what I mean by that. If you don't, then I'll say it's jest about large enough to build a house on and leave space enough to walk around it. In the center of it there's a curious kind of rock that has three points stickin' out of it like that," and the speaker, in way of illustration, held up three fingers. "Have you seen such a rock 'round here?"

"What interest have you in it?"

"Never mind that, sonny. All we want to know is if an island with such a rock on it is anywhere around this neighborhood."

Joe didn't know whether to answer in the affirmative or not. It was clear to him that the speaker had a strong interest in Spindle Island, as he had christened it, and that his interest centered around the peculiar-shaped rock which bore the three numerals. What was behind this interest? Was it possible that these three sailor-like chaps held the secret of the numerals? Joe's heart began to beat faster. And what did the secret point to—a buried treasure?

If so, could it be the fortune connected with the three copper cents? Had Fate led him to the neighborhood, the knowledge of which was in some way indicated by the coins? How had these men learned the secret without the three copper cents to guide them? Joe would have given a whole lot to learn just what they knew on the subject.

"Well, sonny, why don't you answer? It ain't a hard question, is it?"

Joe was half a mind to say "No," for he was suspicious of these men and their purpose on the island; but he judged they would ask somebody else in the vicinity, and were bound to learn that the island described was close by, so he said:

"Yes, there is such an island near here."

"Good!" said the man, in a tone of satisfaction, looking at his companions. "Whereabouts?"

"Off yonder," said Joe, pointing. "About a third of a mile from the shore."

"That's all, sonny. Much obliged to you for the information. I s'pose we could find a boat hereabouts if we wanted to go off to that island."

"You might be able to borrow a boat if the owner was satisfied you'd bring it back."

"Oh, we'd bring it back, all right. You see, a vessel I was aboard of went on that island one dark stormy night a year or more ago and every-

body was drowned 'ceptin' me. I managed to get ashore and was taken off the next day. It happened that I'd just been paid off before I took passage in the sloop, and all my money was in a small bag. While I was on the island I laid the money out to dry in the sun and somehow or other it fell into a crevice of the rock with the three points and I couldn't get it out. I'm going back to hunt for it now. That's why I want to get to the island, you see," and the speaker leered at Joe in a cunning sort of way.

Joe knew he was lying, for the yarn was exceedingly fishy. He pretended to accept the fellow's statement and, touching the horse with the reins, started on again.

"If those chaps see our sailboat when they get to the shore they may break the lock and use the boat without taking the trouble to ask permission," said Joe to himself. "I don't think they'd hesitate doing anything that suited them if the chance came their way."

When he got back, Farmer Wheatley was in the yard. Joe told him about the men he had met on the road and gave him an outline of the interview.

"I don't see what they want to go to that island for," said the farmer.

"One of them gave me a cock-and-bull story about having lost some money on it a year ago, and that he was going over there to look for it," said Joe. "That was rather thin, for it isn't likely he would wait a whole year before looking for the money if he had really lost any on the island. Liars ought to have good memories. He forgot when he gave me that yarn that only a few minutes before he had asked me if the island he had described was anywhere in this vicinity. You can take it from me, Mr. Wheatley, that those men have some special reason for wanting to reach that island, and that they've never been there before. As they'll have to have a boat, I think we'd better keep a sharp eye on ours, or they might take it and forget to return it."

"Then you'd better run down to the landing and watch a while."

"I will by and by. It will take them half an hour or more to get to the shore. Then it will be dusk. A strange time for them to embark for that island," said Joe.

The boy went about his chores, and when it grew dark and supper was on the table he told Jennie to save his for him, as he was going to the shore on business. He sat down in the shadow of a clump of bushes where he could watch the landing, and waited. Half an hour elapsed and he saw no sign of the men. It was now dark, and as he could not see what good it would do the three men to go to the island at that hour, he concluded to return to the house, believing that the men, having learned where the island was, would postpone their visit to it until the morning. At that moment he heard the sound of oars, and, looking in the direction whence the noise came, he saw a small, dark shadow shooting across the water toward the island.

"There they go now," he muttered. "They've borrowed or taken Farmer Black's rowboat, and are making for the island. Gosh! but I'd give a good deal to find out what is taking them there."

He peered through the gloom after the boat,

which was no longer discernible, even as an outline, to his eyes. Then an idea occurred to him. That was to sail over to the island and endeavor to make a landing, unseen by the men, under cover of the darkness. He was a bit afraid that his plan would not succeed since the men would be apt to see the white sail of the boat.

"I could sail straight out to a point abreast of the island and then haul down the sail and let the current of the lake, which is setting in that direction, carry me to the island," he thought.

It would be necessary to go to the house for the key of the lock which secured the boat to the landing. That wouldn't take much time, for it always hung on a nail in the kitchen, near the stove. He hurried to the house and found that all hands had had their supper but Jennie, and she was waiting for Joe to show up.

"I can't eat now," he said.

"Why not?" Jennie asked him.

"I'm going over to the island, and came up for the key of the boat."

"What are you going to the island at this hour for?" Jennie asked, in astonishment.

"I have no time to tell you now," he said, taking down the key.

As he looked a bit excited, the girl was decidedly curious to know what was in the wind.

"I'll be back in half an hour or so," he said, as he started for the door and walked rapidly out.

Hurrying to the shore, he looked out on the dark waters of the lake in the direction of the island, which was not visible now from the shore. Had the night been a bright, starlit one the outline of the island would have been clearly visible, but it was a hot, murky night, that made objects even at a short distance hard to see. As Joe looked he saw a glimmer of light out on the water. At first he thought it was aboard some small craft, but as it moved here and there within a small radius, disappeared and appeared again, and finally vanished altogether, he judged that it was on the island.

"Those fellows must have got hold of a lantern and are using it to conduct whatever investigations they have on the tapis," said Joe. "Well, I'm glad it's so dark. I'll be able to approach the island without being seen. There is just enough breeze to carry me over there at a slow pace. I hope I'll find out something worth the trouble I'm taking."

He embarked and headed the boat for the point where he judged the island was. In a short time he saw its dark outline ahead of him. He headed the boat so as to land on the north shore by running her nose on the narrow beach. This end of the island was thickly covered with small trees which would hide the boat's sail from the sight of the men. He now saw the light, which appeared to come from a lantern standing on the ground close to the rock.

As soon as he turned the north shore of the island the light disappeared from sight, being cut off by the trees. He ran the boat in to the beach. Having previously removed his shoes and stockings, and rolled up his trousers, he was prepared to leap into the shallow water with the mooring-line. Tying the rope to a convenient tree, Joe started forward through the shrubbery, being careful to make as little noise as possible.

CHAPTER XIII.—The Three Copper Cents Yield Up Their Secret.

The rock where the light and the three men were, being in the center of the island, Joe had only a short distance to go before he came within sight of them. One of them was busy with a shovel in a hole that had already been excavated to a depth of three or four feet. The other two had taken a turn each at the work, and they stood by watching the result of the companion's efforts.

"It's about time we struck somethin'," said the man who had done the talking to Joe in the road.

"Maybe there ain't nothin' here," said the digger.

"It's here, all right; but the thing is to strike the place. If we had got hold of those three copper cents, we'd have been all right."

At the mention of the three copper cents, Joe's heart gave a great bound, for he easily overheard every word spoken by the men, from his crouching position a few feet away in the shrubbery. So the three copper cents did have a direct connection with the three spindles! What an astonishing freak of fortune that he should be brought to the actual neighborhood where it seemed evident that the fortune, referred to by the broker's son, was buried, awaiting the person who could solve the secret of the three copper cents.

"The chap who had them is dead, and whoever got hold of them, not knowing what was inside of them, and figuring that they were worthless, probably fired them away," said the other man, who was leaning against one of the spindles.

"Maybe he gave them to somebody before he died and told him the secret," said the first man. "If he did, there's no sign that that party has been here yet."

"He might have told somebody," said the other. "He knew he couldn't get hold of the fortune himself, and if he had a friend, he would be likely to put him onto the secret sooner than have it go to waste. I guess it's a good thing we got here in time, for if the money-box is still on this island we ought to get it."

"Here, one of you fellers take hold. I'm tired," said the man in the hole.

The first chap took the shovel.

"We've gone down deep enough. We'll lengthen the hole out," he said. "We may have to dig along the whole face of the stone."

"I don't see why," said the third chap, the man who had just stepped out of the hole. "If it was put anywhere, I should say that the spot we are at work in is the right place, for it's opposite the center point, so I say keep on digging down."

"We might dig down to China and not find it here," said the first man, after throwing out a few spadefuls of earth. "It doesn't follow it's in front of the center point. It might be in front of either of the others, or between them."

"Suppose you were hidin' the box, where would you put it?" asked the other.

"I'd put it anywhere in front of the rock," was the reply.

"We're workin' half blindly, anyway," said the third man, lighting his pipe. "All we learned was that the box of gold was buried on an island in Lake Erie, off the shore of New York

State, near the village of Singleton, and that the island would be recognized by a big stone having three points like a toastin'-fork. The real directions are soldered up in the three copper pennies, which bear numbers to designate the order in which they are to be opened and read. How do we know but we're all at sea over the right place to dig? The box might be hidden in another part of the island."

The man in the hole, who appeared to be the leader of the bunch, paused in his digging.

"If you're right, French, then we stand a blamed small chance of findin' the money-box," he said. "We can't dig the whole island over searchin' for it."

"That would take considerable time and hard work, and would attract attention, which would queer us," said French. "We'll dig all along the front of the stone, if that is necessary, and if we don't find the box then we'd better give it up till mornin'. Perhaps with daylight we may get a clue to the right spot."

His companions agreed to that, and the digging proceeded as fast as possible. It was now close on to nine o'clock and Joe wondered how long it would take them to do the work outlined, supposing that they failed to find the box in the meanwhile.

"Jennie is wondering what is keeping me," he thought. "I'll bet she'd come over here herself looking for me if she was able to do so; but as I have the boat, that is out of the question. I may not get back till ten or eleven o'clock, for I don't mean to leave the island till I see how these chaps come out. It will be just like her to wait up for me and keep my supper warm in the stove. She's a dear good girl. If I discover this treasure box, through the three copper cents, the secret of which I am now on to, she shall have a share of it. We're both poor, and a fortune would come in handy for us. Maybe some day we'll think enough of each other to get married, and then we'd have it all between us."

An hour passed and a trench of some depth was excavated in front of the rock, but the treasure-box did not come to light. Finally the men gave up, tired and disgusted by their futile efforts, and postponing further work till the following morning, they left the spade sticking in the hole, embarking in their boat and pulled for the shore to return to the village for a night's lodging, quite unconscious that their operations had been observed by the person who had possession of the three copper cents, the mystery of which they had themselves unraveled for him.

As soon as they were well on their way, Joe boarded the sailboat and returned to the landing, full of determination to see what was inside the coins before he went to bed. It was eleven o'clock when he reached the house, and, as he more than half expected, he found Jennie waiting for him in the kitchen, but she was fast asleep in a chair, with her head on her arms, which rested on the table. He woke her up.

"So you've got back at last," she said. "My gracious, look at the time it is! Five minutes after eleven. Have you been on the island all this time?" she asked.

"Yes. I made a long stay of it, didn't I?"

"I should say you did. You said you'd be back in about half an hour."

"Well, circumstances prevented me from getting back as soon as I expected. I'll take whatever supper you've saved for me."

Jennie placed the dishes on the table before him and poured him out a cup of tea.

"I've a whole lot to tell you," he said, as he began to eat.

"I'm almost too sleepy to listen to you."

"Then I guess you'd better go to bed and I'll tell you in the morning. I'll tell you this much, and that is those three copper cents are directly connected with the island and the three spindles."

"Are you sure? How did you find that out?"

"It would take too long to tell you now. The second and more important fact is, I've learned the secret of the three copper cents."

"Have you, really?" she asked eagerly.

"I have."

"What is it?"

"The direction how to find the spot where the box of gold is hidden on the island are soldered up inside the cents."

"You don't mean it!"

"The numerals I, II and III were stamped on the coins to indicate the order in which they are to be opened and their contents read."

"Dear me, you must tell me how you discovered all this, or I know I shan't sleep a wink to-night."

"Pooh! you're falling asleep at this minute."

"I am not. I'm real wide awake now."

Joe concluded to tell her everything, and he did, beginning with his meeting with the three sailor-like strangers on the road from the village that afternoon. He finished his supper before he did his story, and the girl listened to him with surprised attention.

"I don't see how those cents could have been split in half and then joined together again so the crack wouldn't show," she said.

"I don't believe they were split, because that would be a very difficult feat to accomplish."

"How, then?"

"I was thinking the matter over on my way from the island. I came to the conclusion that six cents were used."

"Six!"

"Yes. The face of three cents and the reverse of three others were carefully filed down to half their original thickness. The directions were then written on three small, round pieces of paper, somewhat smaller than the coins. The first piece of paper was laid in the center of one of the filed coins, the reverse of that coin placed over it after the inner edge of both had been coated with some adhesive cement. The same process was repeated with the other two and then the three were placed under a heavy weight and allowed to remain some time. After that the edges of the joined cents were carefully sandpapered, and then they looked exactly like three ordinary cents of the period they belonged to."

"Your explanation sounds very convincing, and now you're going to split them open and get the three round pieces of paper, which you expect will tell you where the money-box is to be found?"

"That's right. Come out to the barn with me where the tools are and we'll get to work on them. Or I'll attend to the matter if you prefer to go to bed."

"No, no; I wouldn't think of going to bed until

I see what is inside the three copper cents," she said.

Joe and Jennie at once went to the barn. The boy took the chamois-skin bag out of his pocket and dumped out the three cents on the bench. Then he took a hammer and a sharp chisel and began operations. Two or three smart taps of the hammer caused the first cent to split in two. There was no paper inside. The insides of the two halves were filed smooth, as Joe had figured on, and on the contracted surface of each was delicately scratched some writing in printed characters. The two halves of the "I" cent contained the following:

"Box buried on Is. of 3 Needles, Lake E, 2 m NE Singleton."

Joe opened cent "II" and found the following:

"When the 3 needles line with set. sun note point of show."

Cent "III" revealed the following:

"Measure 8 ft. due S from shadow. Winter 9 ft. Dig 5 ft."

The mystery of the three copper cents had been solved."

CHAPTER XIV.—Conclusion.

"The secret of the three copper cents is mine at last, Jennie, thanks to the clue I got to-night from those strangers who are after the prize themselves, but are handicapped for want of the knowledge of the proper place to dig. They simply wasted their time to-night digging a deep trench in front of the rock. The right spot is some distance, I judge, from the rock, and away from it, in the direction of the shore," said Joe, greatly tickled at his success and the prospect of finding the box of gold, which he meant to go after the next day.

"I congratulate you, Joe," said the girl.

"Thank you, Jennie. You shall come and help me find the box, and if we are successful, as we ought to be, you shall have a share of the money."

"I'm not entitled to much, Joe, but I will be grateful to you for whatever you care to give me," said Jennie.

"You're entitled to a good share. We have studied this problem over together, and you are the only person who shares the secret with me. Maybe some day you'll share something else with me."

"What is that, Joe?"

"Your heart, Jennie."

"Oh, Joe!" cried the girl, with a blush.

"Do you think you'll ever care enough for me for that?"

"Yes, Joe, for I already love you very dearly."

"Do you? And I love you, too."

He took her in his arms and kissed her blushing face and lips. Then he got her to write down on a slip of paper the directions on the inside of cents "II" and "III," after which they left the barn and sought their rooms for a few hours of sleep. Remembering that the three strangers intended to return to the island next morning and resume their hunt for the box, Joe couldn't help feeling nervous lest they might accidentally hit on the right spot. He wondered if he couldn't

head them off some way. He could think of no plan that would not arouse their suspicions. Should they remain on the island all day, or return in the afternoon again, it would block his own plans.

He consulted with Jennie before breakfast, but she could suggest nothing that would help him out. He had to let matters take their course and trust to luck. After dinner he got permission from the farmer to take an hour off work before sundown. Then, with a spade and a small compass, and accompanied by Jennie, he boarded the sailboat and put off for the island. They were not sure but they would find the three men still on the island, and they sailed around it before venturing to land, with their gaze on the beach for a sight of their rowboat.

It was not to be seen, so Joe concluded that they had left for the day or perhaps, disappointed in their quest, for good. They landed at the flat rock and secured the boat as before. Stepping ashore, the first thing the boy did was to note the shadow cast by the three spindles. They were nearly in line with the setting sun. Then it was that Joe noticed the large stone which he had noticed near the shore had been dug up all around to the depth of several feet. He looked toward the south, but the ground in that direction had not been touched, much to his relief. He took up a position at a point where the three spindles lined up as one, and waited for the sun to get squarely behind them.

At the moment this happened the point of the shadow rested in the center of the stone. Joe marked it, and, taking a piece of heavy cord exactly eight feet long from his pocket, he placed one end of it on the mark. Then he placed the compass on the ground and drew the cord across the "South" point. Holding it there, he told Jennie to take the other end of the cord and stretch it in that direction as far as it would go. She did so. Sighting along the cord to make sure that the girl stood on the right spot, he took up the shovel, walked over and began to dig.

Both he and Jennie were on the tiptoe of expectation, for unless the box had previously been removed by some other person, which seemed unlikely, in view of the fact that Joe alone had secured the directions, they seemed sure of finding it. Joe made the dirt fly in his eagerness to reach results. Foot by foot he excavated the soil.

"I must be down five feet now," he said, jamming the spade into the earth.

It met with some resistance.

"I've hit it, I guess!" he said excitedly.

He cleared the dirt away from the object and they both saw the top of a metal box.

"We are the people, Jennie!" cried Joe, in a tone of triumph. "The box is here, and that means I have found a fortune."

It took twenty minutes' more digging to fully uncover the box, which the boy found too heavy to lift, or even more. The key stood in it, however, and after much difficulty it was turned and the cover thrown up, revealing a profusion of gold coin of early date. Jennie had, at Joe's suggestion, provided a number of small meal-bags, and these were filled with the gold and carried to the sailboat. When the box had been three-quarters emptied they were able to lift it out of the

hole and carry it to the boat. With his fortune in his possession, Joe turned the boat's head shoreward and they soon reached the landing. Jennie started for the house, with a bag of gold in each hand. When she carried them into the house Mrs. Wheatley asked her what she had.

"Money," she said, and the farmer's wife laughed at the idea, which seemed ridiculous to her.

The girl carried the bags to Joe's room and returned for more. After making several trips, all the bags were at the house, then she and Joe carried up the box with the balance. Farmer Wheatley was in the yard, and Joe showed him the gold and said he had three times as much more in his room. The farmer's astonishment may be imagined. At the supper table Joe told the story of how he had found it. He showed the three split copper cents with the directions scratched upon their smooth insides.

"Upon my word, you are a rich young man," said the farmer, "and I congratulate you on your good fortune. I suppose I shall lose you now? You'll go back to the city."

"Not right away I won't, Mr. Wheatley. I engaged to work for you up to the first day of December, and I intend to keep my contract. I would keep it even if I had come into a million," said Joe. "You've treated me white from the moment I first met you, and I would be ashamed of myself if I failed to do the same by you. I have no idea who buried the gold or where the broker's son got those three copper cents."

Joe's speech showed the kind of boy he was, and the farmer said that Joe was the best boy he had ever known, and he wished he had a son like him. The money was counted that night and footed up \$60,000. Joe presented Jennie with \$7,000, the farmer and his wife with \$1,000 each, and divided another \$1,000 among the four hired hands.

Next day, Joe and the farmer carried the gold to the Singleton Bank and placed it on deposit to the credit of the different owners. About the first of December Joe went to New York, looking like a dude. Registering at the Astor House, he made his first call on Broker Blakeley, and received a warm reception. He learned that Richard Blakeley had died at the hospital and then been buried.

The secret of where he got the three marked cents died with him, and as Joe did not know who owned the treasure, or who the other treasure-hunters were, he kept the money. During his first week in the city Joe learned that the Italian had died in the hospital of a fractured skull, and Jim Starkey, the crook, had been tried for his murder, and convicted in the second degree and got a life sentence.

Joe returned to the farm to spend the Christmas and New York holidays, and he decided to stay there and work the next season, for he wished to be near Jennie. It is unnecessary to say what he did with his \$50,000, for our story properly ends with the three copper cents and how they made a waif's fortune.

Next week's issue will contain "THE OLD TRADER'S LEGACY, AND WHAT HIS OFFICE BOY DID WITH IT."

CURRENT NEWS

GIANT GAS TANK BEING BUILT

The second largest gas holder in the world is under construction in Baltimore. When fully inflated the great tank will have a capacity of 10,000,000 cubic feet of gas.

LARGEST LOCK

The greatest single lock in all the world is in operation on the "Soo" Canal. This lock has a length of 1,350 feet, with a width of 50 feet, a height of 50 feet and a lift of 20 feet. These dimensions far surpass those of any other lock in the world, the length of the biggest lock in the Kiel Canal being but 1,032 feet. Two of the largest lake freighters that plow these waters, or four small steamers, may be accommodated in the lock at one time. The lock is operated by means of electricity and requires but six minutes to be filled or emptied.

WHALE WITH LEGS.

The first whale with hind legs has been caught in British Columbia. This was described at a recent lecture held at the American Museum of Natural History. The legs project some four feet from the body near the tail, and are about six inches broad, the bones being covered with a thick layer of blubber which may or may not have contained muscle. The whale, a female fifty feet in length, was unfortunately not preserved at the Victoria whaling station, where it was brought in, and one of the legs was broken off by those making the capture.

FAST MAIL TIME.

On February 23rd the United States Mail Service broke all records for fast mail between San Francisco and New York City, when an airplane reached Mineola with seven pounds of mail. The distance covered was over 2,700 miles, and the actual time 33 hours and 20 minutes, or twice as fast as mail has ever been carried between the two cities by the air route. Night flying made the record possible. Jack Knight of Cheyenne, Wyo., carried the mail through the night, steering by compass, between Omaha and Chicago. Although the route was new to him, he flew over the 1,000-mile course and landed safely.

WHY FEBRUARY IS SHORT.

In the old days when the Roman rulers had nothing else to worry about, they did something to the calendar.

And February, it appears, was a victim. Originally this perfectly good month had 30 days in leap years and 29 in other years. February is from the Latin, meaning "to purify." It was the custom of the Romans to celebrate the festival of purification in February.

Julius Caesar named July in his own honor—he saw to it there were 31 days in it. Then along came Augustus and a month was named for him also. But August looked around and picked on February, which had no one particularly to defend it. He just took a day off February and added it to his own pet month.

That's why February ordinarily has but 28 days and why August has 31, in keeping with the dignity of its imperious namesake.

ABRUZZI'S POLAR STAR SOLD FOR JUNK.

Patriotic Italians greatly regret the fate of the ship Polar Star, once the pride of the Duke of the Abruzzi, cousin of Italy's king, who commanded the only North Polar expedition Italians have made.

The Duke penetrated further north than Nansen had done shortly before. On his return home, where he was much feasted, interviewed, pictured and praised, the Duke presented the ship to the Italian Government.

Any other government, say the patriots, would have been proud of such a historic ship and would at least have kept it in good condition. It was moored in the Tiber for a long while, lent to a charitable society as a playground for poor children, abandoned even by the youngsters, allowed to go to rack and ruin, until it became an eyesore on the Roman landscape, and was then taken in a very broken down state to the port of Civitavecchia a few miles from Rome, as being the most fitting spot for its decay.

But the port there is encumbered with many things, and the once smart and efficient Polar Star has been sold as junk for 27,000 lire. At to-day's exchange rate, it is little more than \$1,000.

The Italian Naval League heard of the sale too late to rescue this relic of royal enterprise; the junk dealer had already put down the money. The Navy League has protested against so mean an end to the gallant ship.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST RATS.

A special conference of state health officers with the U. S. Public Health Service was held in Texas last August to consider the bubonic plague situation, and the resolution was adopted that "a nation-wide effort should be made to determine as accurately as possible the presence or absence of rodent plague in all ports of entry and principal centers of railway freight transportation in the United States," and further that the present situation in the southern states "should be the occasion for inaugurating a nation-wide campaign against rodents on economic as well as public health grounds." In this connection the Public Health Service has published full instructions concerning rat surveys and rat proofing and has drawn up a model building ordinance with a view to eliminating rats. It is a fact not generally recognized that, apart from their well-known powers of spreading disease, rats impose a very serious economic burden upon the community. In this country it is estimated that their depredations amount to \$167,000,000 a year. The rat population of the United States is conservatively estimated to be equal to the human population, and similar figures have been published for Great Britain, Denmark, France and Germany. The annual upkeep per rodent is estimated at \$1.80 in Great Britain, \$1.20 in Denmark, and \$1.00 in France. (These are pre-war figures.)

A Lawyer At Nineteen

—OR—

FIGHTING AGAINST A FRAUD

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER VI.—(continued.)

Then he narrated the entire train of circumstances since he had left his home to proceed to his office, winding up with a request that he be permitted to whisper his true name and occupation in the ear of the judge.

"Step right up here," heartily said the judge, who could see that something was wrong with the case. All eyes followed Lew as he ascended to the bench, and the young woman who called herself Grace Carrington took advantage of the fact to quietly slip out of court.

"That settles the matter," said the judge, when Lew had made known his name and occupation. "You are honorably discharged, and as for this young woman who has made such an infamous charge against you——"

And then it was discovered that the complainant had left court. Officers were instantly sent out to bring her back, but she had made good her escape.

"I would have held her, and tried to find out what was at the bottom of this business," said the judge. "If ever you lay eyes on her, young man, have her arrested and brought before me."

Lew promised that he would do so, and then thanked the judge for his kindness and left the court. Thinking deeply over the matter, he made his way to the office and at once went in to see John Scribner and tell him what had taken place.

The old lawyer thought over the matter before delivering himself of an opinion.

"I think I understand what has caused this," he said, "and if I am right then you are in grave danger, for those who put up the job to jail you this morning will not stop because of this one defeat. I was so elated over the way that you handled the Smollett case that I told all the office force about it, and said that I was going to have you assist me in defending the Winslow case when it comes up for trial.

Such a statement becomes a matter of gossip among the clerks of different offices, and might easily have been carried to the ears of Duncan Sniffen and those who are interested with him in what I firmly believe to be a fraudulent case.

"Your shrewdness and sharpness, as shown the time you conducted the Smollett case, added to your peculiar quality of seeming to look right through a witness with those eagle eyes of yours, have probably alarmed the conspirators and made them resolve to get you out of the way until the Winslow case has been tried. I have had bad luck with the cases of the Intercity Railroad for the past year or so, and these rascals are banking on that run of bad luck and the strength of

the case they have cooked up. They don't fear me, Lew, but they do fear you."

"And they have reason to," confidently said the young lawyer. "Quite by accident I stumbled across something at a moving picture show that will enable me to smash their case and land the conspirators in jail."

And then he carefully narrated to the eager old lawyer what he had seen and done at the picture show.

"You are sure of your ground?" delightedly cried John Scribner.

"Positive."

"That's fine. Here is a check for what you have advanced, and you can call on me for any amount."

At that moment one of the clerks knocked on the door of the private office, and when told to come in he announced that word had been telephoned from the supreme court that the calendar had tumbled down several numbers, and that the case of Winslow against the Intercity Railroad would probably be reached within a half hour.

"I'm glad of it," said the old lawyer, "for that will prevent them from putting up any more jobs on you, Lew. If the case is tried to-day we'll smash the rascals, and that will end the matter. While I'm getting the papers together you had better call up that manager and have him hold himself ready to send the reel and an operator when you want them."

Lew went to the telephone while his employer carefully tied up the papers in the Winslow case, and then they left the office together, bound for the supreme court.

John Scribner had never been so elated in years.

As he had told Lew, he had been in hard luck with the cases of the Intercity Railroad Company for over a year, and now to think that he had the chance of not only beating the biggest case against that corporation that he had ever handled, but also the prospect of putting the plaintiff and all connected with her in jail, made him skip along the hallway to the stairs like a sixteen-year-old boy.

His elation came near costing him his life, for he missed the top stair as he was about to run gaily down, and plunged forward.

Lew was at his side and made a quick clutch at him. He caught the sleeve of the old lawyer's coat as the latter stumbled, but his hold was only a slight one, and the sleeve was torn from his hand.

Down the steep flight of a dozen steps the old lawyer plunged, and after him went Lew, covering the descent in two leaps, but when he reached the bottom John Scribner was lying there groaning with pain.

Lew made as though to lift him up, but the old lawyer waved him away.

"It's no use, Lew," he groaned. "My leg is broke. I heard it snap when I struck the landing. The only thing to do is to go back to the office and get help to carry me in without hurting me, and then a private ambulance can be sent for and I can be taken home. I suppose this means three months in the house for me, if not longer."

(To be continued)

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

THE FIRST STEEL PEN

Some eighty years ago Joseph Gillet was a working jeweler in Birmingham, England. One day he accidentally split one of his fine steel tools and, being suddenly required to sign a receipt and, not finding a quill handy, he used the split tool as a substitute. This happy incident is said to have led to the idea of making pens of metal.

KILLED BY BENZOIN FUMES

Raymond Marquez of Brooklyn, employed at the factory of Anthony Napolitan, manufacturer of a roofing preparation at 454 Lorimer street, dropped a five pound can of benzoin which he was carrying. He bent over to pick up the can, and fell to the floor, apparently overcome by fumes. An ambulance was called from St. Catherine's Hospital, and by the time it arrived Marquez was dead.

Dr. De Pedro, the ambulance surgeon, said he believed it was possible for the benzoin fumes escaping from the can to have caused death. The medical examiner's office began an investigation.

THAT CAPRONI GIANT

For a long time back rumors have been coming to us of the remarkable giant machine being constructed by the Caproni Brothers of Italy. Now we learn that this machine, a huge flying boat with a capacity of 100 passengers, is completed. It has cost \$800,000 to construct, and over four years of constant labor. The machine is remarkable for the absence of a tail. It is composed of three sets of three planes each, above a long fish shaped boat. The passengers are carried in the cabin which forms the boat body. The length of this machine is 75 feet, and the width 108 feet. It is equipped with eight 12-cylinder motors. The total lifting capacity is twenty-six tons.

BANDITS LOOT CELLAR OF LIQUOR

Eight unmasked boy bandits looted the wine cellar of W. H. Hoyt, wealthy capitalist, in the fashionable Mission Hills district, Kansas City, Mo., of \$15,000 worth of wines and liquors. The robbery, kept secret for two weeks, was committed by daylight.

The boys entered by the front door, bound a butler and took their pick of the capitalist's liquors. They carried cases of wine and whisky out to the driveway, piling the loot in an auto truck. During the robbery Mrs. C. S. Jones, mother-in-law of Hoyt, descended from an upper floor. She was "covered" by one of the robbers and compelled to watch the depredation.

After filling their machine the bandits fled.

PIGS RUN WILD

Several hundred pigs ran wild through the streets and yards in the East Buffalo section March 5, when 200 women, weary of waiting for city ordinances to regulate live stock driving in the streets, took the law into their own hands. The women first argued with the drovers and, finding them obdurate attacked them with sticks and stones. The pigs scattered during the melee.

A detail of policemen quelled the riot. The drovers were cut and bruised, but seemed most concerned over the loss of their charges.

The Departments of Health and Public Safety have had under consideration for several weeks ordinances forbidding the promiscuous driving of pigs through the streets.

TREE GROWS ON TOWER

A tree growing on the courthouse tower has given Greensburg, Ind., the name of "The Lone Tree City." The tree first appeared in 1871 and has weathered the storms for nearly 49 years. It is still alive and vigorous, leafing out in the spring with other trees and waving its branches at a height of 110 feet from the ground.

This tree is really one of the world's wonders. There is only one other place where there is anything of the kind and that is on an old mill in Scotland, near the birthplace of Robert Burns. Whenever a passenger train goes through Greensburg the windows go up and heads are thrust out. There is much craning of necks to see the courthouse tree.

There were seven trees in all appearing in the early 70s on the tower and an eighth in 1900.

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THE SIX VICTIMS

By JOHN SHERMAN

One evening a man rode into one of the mushroom "cities" on our Western border, and drew rein before the principal hotel.

A motley crowd of loungers, consisting in the main of gamblers, worthless miners and well-known law-breakers, greeted his appearance, and from the appellation of "Stranger," which they applied to him, it was evident that he was not a frequenter of the place.

While the horseman's clothes were genteel and unapproachable for that lawless portion of our Union, his face was pale, haggard, and in every sense of the word woe-begone.

"Gentlemen," he said, addressing the crowd, "will one of you fetch me a glass of whisky?"

"Certainly, pardner," said a tall, red-shirted miner. "D'ye want the best?"

"If it is good—yes," was the reply, and the sarcasm was received with a smile.

Without noticing the bright silver dollar which the haggard-looking man displayed, the miner entered the hotel and soon reappeared with a glass of liquor, which he handed to its wisher.

The next moment a single gulp caused it to disappear, and the horseman said, as he returned the glass:

"Did you ever hear of Tom Bernard?"

"Never!" was the answer from a dozen.

"Well, that's who I am," the stranger continued. "I look pretty hard, eh? Been riding a long distance. See here!"

With the last word the speaker unbuttoned the coat that covered his breast, and revealed a shirt stained with gore.

Ejaculations of horror went up from the crowd.

"Been shot? Yes, sir!" Bernard said, replying to the wild looks and wilder exclamations of one at the same time. "It's the end of Tom Bernard, but I swore that I wouldn't die until I had emptied my revolver among the devils who did this, and I die right here—right here in Deadwood."

Bernard tossed his reins carelessly upon the neck of his jaded steed, and drew a formidable Colt's revolver.

At sight of the deadly weapon there was a movement of uneasiness in the crowd.

"Hang 'im!" grated one man. "The chap may be crazy. If he raises that thing, I'll drop 'im!"

But Bernard smiled at the fears of the crowd, and hastened to dissipate them.

"No fears, gentlemen. We are all friends together," he said. "I never saw one of you before to-day, and before sundown we shall part forever. I know this, for they are coming, and I am going to die here."

"Comin'! who are?" said a dark-faced desperado, rising to his feet, and stalking towards the white-faced man. "If they're after you, an' are too many, I'll stand up an' help you through. Mike Blue never did go back on a fellow-man what was hard pressed."

The rough turned to the crowd for a confirma-

tion of his boast, and received it in flattering coin. "Thar, stranger!" he said, turning upon Bernard, and waving his revolver with pride towards his hardened associates, "thar stands the boys what knows Mike Blue, an' knows him for a man what has a big heart. If you want help it is hyar! If thar's twenty uv us, thar's at least thirty revolvers, an' we——"

"No!" interrupted Bernard. "It is my fight. You boys haven't anything at stake in it. I thank you all. I knew there were men in Deadwood."

"If you are determined to go it alone, we will respect yer decision," Blue said. "You says they are after you?"

"Yes."

"How many?"

"Twelve."

"An' you hev but one revolver?"

"Yes."

"Then take Mike Blue's an' hev another. It are a good un—killed three men on cinnamon Bar last winter. You look as if you kin use one."

Bernard shook his head, and pushed the proffered weapon aside.

"Many thanks, Mike," he said. "If I took it I might kill somebody whom I would spare. My own weapon is all I want. Six shots—six men!"

"If you hit all the time," Blue said, doubtingly. "But it appears to me that thar's gallopin' down the road."

Tom Bernard caught the import of the sentence before the desperado could finish it, and turned his head to listen.

There were unmistakable sounds of a cavalcade approaching the dingy "square," and the crowd listened and watched the determined man.

"'Tis they!" Bernard said, closing his lips firmly behind the last monosyllable, and he deliberately cocked his weapon.

"Stand back, boys," Mike Blue said to his confederates. "There is goin' to be fun here, an' if Bernard thar doesn't hev a fair showin' why, we'll get 'im one."

"I'll get that—never mind!" the horseman said. "I will show you a specimen of shooting that may amaze some of you, and, as it will be the last I shall ever give, you may, perhaps, remember it."

Then his eyes wandered down the narrow street of Deadwood, flanked on either side by saloons and other places of disreputable resort, and caught sight of the twelve horsemen who had entered the town.

They came forward at a brisk gallop, each man grasping a revolver or carbine.

Rough-looking fellows they were—red-shirted, grizzly-bearded characters—men who did not value life save for the privilege of casting it away in a fierce, wild fight.

They rode straight for the "hotel," and a cry of astonishment, not unmingled with satisfaction, pealed from their throats when they beheld their man calmly awaiting them.

"Gentlemen," said Bernard to Mike Blue and his companions, "one of those men killed my brother. I took revenge. They shot me this morning—shot me cowardly from behind a cliff. Now we are going to settle our feud forever. Six shots—six men. You shall see."

Almost before the last word had left the speaker's lips, the harsh voice of the leader of the self-made vigilantes was heard.

"We have you now!" he cried. "Surrender at discretion, or we'll make a sieve of your carcass!"

There was no reply, but Tom Bernard's eyes twinkled with a light that is indescribable, and a singular smile distorted his ashen lips.

How the borderers before the hotel watched him!

Not one looked to the rough men who demanded the hunted brother's surrender. He was the center of attraction.

A minute of inactivity was not permitted to follow the demand.

Bernard was smiling still when he raised his revolver, and so quick were six shots sent from its chambers, that not one of Mike's gang could count them.

It was a piece of rapid firing that astonished every one.

Six saddles seemed to have been emptied simultaneously, for six men were lying on the ground before the smoke left Bernard's weapon.

After the last shot, Tom Bernard flung his revolver at Mike Blue's feet, saying:

"Take it, Mike, and think of me," then before the astonished vigilantes could recover their equilibrium, he tore open his coat and jerked every bandage from his breast.

A gush of long-imprisoned blood followed this terrible action, and the next moment Bernard fell from his horse.

He was dead!

When the "soi disant" vigilantes discovered this, they mingled with the crowd, and told the story of Bernard's crime, which was the same as his hasty narration of it.

REINDEER MEAT FOR U. S. FOOD

Santa Claus's reindeer have promise of becoming a factor in the meat supply of this country, as they are in Scandinavia, where reindeer meat last year sold at a higher price than beef or mutton.

And the Government is going to aid in putting the infant industry of Alaska on its feet by experiments in increasing the reindeer's weight to about double its present average, scientifically breeding them, locating ranges and scientifically studying their diseases, parasites and grazing problems. Provision is made in the agricultural appropriation bill of this year for that purpose.

Dr. E. W. Nelson, chief of the Biological Survey, in urging the appropriation, told Congress there are about 200,000 reindeer in Alaska, of which about three-fourths belong to the natives and about one-fourth to the Government and to white owners who have started a commercial industry in reindeer growing for meat. These reindeer multiplied from an original importation of 1,280 animals made 28 years ago for the benefit of the Eskimos.

"People have asked me what the future of the industry is likely to be," said Dr. Nelson. "I have replied by asking them the question: 'If 1,280 reindeer in 28 years produced the present 200,000

animals, what is likely to be the increase from 200,000 animals in the next 28 years?' The increase is almost unbelievable. In other words, the industry, properly handled, should have a great future.

"The Alaskan firm which has started the industry exported 1,600 head to Seattle last year. They have established four small cold-storage plants at points on the Alaskan coast, where the reindeer can readily be driven down for slaughter to be refrigerated and loaded for shipment. I have recently been studying the possibilities of the Alaskan reindeer industry when well developed. I believe Alaska contains available range to maintain from four to five million reindeer. The estimate has been made that it would take care of 10,000,000, but I think that it too high.

"Five million reindeer would give an output of about 1,250,000 reindeer a year. Dressed for market, one now averages 150 pounds. Taking this weight and the present value of reindeer meat, the fully developed reindeer industry in Alaska should yield approximately \$43,000,000 a year. Reindeer have been in Alaska 28 years and their increase under crude methods of handling has been almost startling. Under proper scientific supervision and modern methods, the industry should develop very rapidly.

"There are big herds of wild caribou about the Mt. McKinley region, some bulls which dress up to about 400 pounds. We plan to capture some bulls of this stock and use them with an experimental herd of reindeer cows for the purpose of building up a higher grade of reindeer, having greater weight and increased hardiness. I believe it will be practicable in less than ten years to have the reindeer of Alaska running from 250 to 300 pounds to the carcass, instead of 150 pounds as at present. The increased weight would increase the value of the fully developed Alaska reindeer industry enough to bring the potential output around \$60,000,000 at present values. That is more than the fisheries of Alaska produce.

FIRST RAILROAD OUT OF CHICAGO

The first railroad to get charter out of Chicago was the Galena and Chicago Union. It was chartered on Jan. 16, 1836, and work on it was at once begun. The object of this road was to increase the value of real estate at both points. Galena being then a leading village of the West, obtained precedence in the naming of the road. Just two days after the incorporation of the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad the Illinois Central Railroad was incorporated. The 58 incorporators failed to do anything, and the project collapsed. It was revived by its immense land grant in September, 1850. The Galena and Chicago Union Railroad was revived in 1846, and by Nov. 21, 1848, the engine was running on the ten miles of completed road west of Chicago, conveying materials and laborers to carry on the work. On Nov. 20, 1848, Chicago received its first wheat transported by rail. In December, 1850, the Galena and Chicago Union was completed to Elgin, Ill., 42 miles, and was the first railroad out of Chicago. By Sept. 4, 1853, this road was 121 miles long.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, APRIL 1, 1921.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

CHINESE PIONEERS IN FISHERIES

The Chinese have devoted themselves for nearly four thousand years to the artificial propagation of fish, shell fish, pearls and sponges.

THUGS RETURN HERO MEDAL

While a negro woman held up Mrs. Annabelle Gemas, along the West Penn street car line near the Gemas home, Connellsville, Pa., Feb. 12, two negroes searched her, took her pocketbook, containing about \$30, but returned a gold service medal which the woman's husband, the late George Gemas, had been awarded for service in the Spanish-American war.

A PERUVIAN-MARVEL

One of the most interesting trips afforded by the present transportation facilities of Peru is that over the Oroya Railroad, which runs from Callao to the gold fields of Cerro de Pasco. It is considered one of the wonders in the Peruvian world. It is certainly the greatest feat of railway engineering in either hemisphere. Commencing in Callao, it ascends the narrow valley of the Rimac, rising nearly five thousand feet in the first forty-six miles. Thence it goes through the intricate gorges of the Sierras till it tunnels the Andes at an altitude of fifteen thousand six hundred and forty-five feet, the highest point in the world where a piston-rod is moved by steam. The wonder is doubted on remembering that this elevation is reached in seventy-eight miles.

FRENCH JUDGES PAID LESS THAN WORKMEN.

Paris, Feb. 12.—Judges of many of the French courts, including some of the higher tribunals, are hinting that they would like to have their pay raised at least to the equivalent of telegraph operators, warehouse watchmen and junior army officers. Their friends point out that the salaries of many of the magistrates are less than those of even ordinarily skilled workmen.

granted allowances to enable them to live at least decently. Some of the judges have told publicly that their colleagues without private incomes have to sell their effects accumulated in better days or do clerical work at home to keep up a living.

French judges are paid from 500 francs a month (now equivalent to about \$35) up to 833 francs (now equivalent to about \$58) for the presiding judge of the higher tribunals.

LAUGHS

"Doctor," said the sweet young maiden, "I've been told that eating cucumbers will remove freckles." "So it will on one condition," replied the doctor. "And what is that?" "That the freckles are on the cucumbers!"

"Hold on, dere, Jimmy Kelly! Yer need not read me no more items out'n de newspaper 'bout soda-fountains explodin' an' manglin' de customers, an' girls gittin' poisoned by ptomaines in ice cream. If yer dead broke, jest say so, like a man' an' I'll t'ink jest as much uv yer."

"How did you like Doctor Fourthly last Sunday morning?" asked Mrs. Oldcastle. "Don't you think he indulged rather freely in mixed metaphor?" "Goodness! I didn't notice him. Did he have it right there in the pulpit? This'll be a terrible blow to Josiah. He thinks so much of the doctor."

A pompous business man of this city was one day lecturing one of his clerks on the manner in which he spent his money, and on his habits generally. "I started at the foot of the ladder," said he. "I did not always have a carriage. When I first started in life I walked." "You were lucky," grinned the youth. "When I first started in life I couldn't."

"Have you decided yet upon a name for that new suburb of yours?" "Yes, I am going to call it Lookout." "I can't see anything striking or original about that." "You can't? Think how everybody in the train will run to the windows when the brakeman calls out the name of the station."

"How's your mother?" asked the neighbor. "Worried to death," answered the boy who was swinging on the front gate. "Father's hunting in the Adirondacks, brother Bill's gone to a political convention, brother Jack's joined a football team, and the dressmaker has just told mother that she'd look a fright in mourning."

"I want a lawn-mower," said Mr. Sewburb, "one that is a misfit in every way. One that couldn't be pushed by an electric power-house, and that wouldn't cut grass anyway." "May I ask," said the amazed clerk, "why you wish such a machine?" "Certainly," replied Mr. Sewburb. "I want to break some of my neighbors of the borrowing habit."

The newspapers have taken up the campaign in their behalf and are urging that they be

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

CATERPILLARS AS FOOD

At a recent meeting of the Entomological Society of America, Mr. J. M. Aldrich of the National Museum stated he found a small tribe of Mono Lake Indians which caught and dried a ton and a half of caterpillars in a season for food.

THE PIGMENT DEPOSITS

The discovery of an extensive deposit of ocher and sienna at no great distance from the surface and within 30 miles of Adelaide, South Australia, has attracted much local interest, particularly in view of the abnormally high price of imported paint pigments. Though regarded primarily as a mining proposition, the discovery is important in a manufacturing sense. During the years of war several new paint works were established in Australia, but the promoters were handicapped to some extent by the necessity of importing most of the requisite raw materials. This new find of ocher and sienna therefore extends the possibilities of the paint industry and should render it largely independent of overseas supplies of the basic pigments.

CURRENTS IN THE MAINE GULF

Some interesting explorations have recently been made in the so-called Gulf of Maine. 330 drift bottles were set out in the bay and 16 of these bottles were picked up off the shores of the Gulf of Maine. Each bottle contained a Canadian post card to be sent to the Biological station with the offer of a reward to the finder who wrote the time and place of finding and posted the card. The larger bottles had a galvanized iron drag which was attached so that the bottle was hung at a depth of three fathoms. This was done to minimize the effect of the wind. Seven out of the 11 bottles which went to Cape Cod were found between seventy and eighty days after being sent out. The distance from the Bay of Fundy is about 300 nautical miles; therefore, the rate of drift was 4 nautical miles per day. There was a map of the course of the drift bottles published in a recent issue of "Science."

A NEW USE FOR PIE TINS

Death-dealing baits, violent destruction by use of gun and dog, traps and other ensnarements, and even the building of a coyote-proof fence, are among the methods of arresting the encroachments of coyotes in the West, a predatory animal so destructive to domestic livestock. It remains, however, for a ranger of the United States Forest Service operating in Utah to employ a simple but clever method of "shooing" away the sneaking thieves of the cattle and sheep ranges.

Acting upon the theory that wild animals are suspicious of artificial illumination, lighted lanterns are stationed near bed grounds used by sheep in timber-line ranges of the National forests. These all-night beacons have their light-reflecting powers multiplied by suspending a new shining tin plate on each side of the lantern. This

arrangement is effected by means of a rod tied to the handle of the lantern, made secure by insertion in the ring of the hood of the lighting fixture, the tin plates being suspended by strings from the ends of the rod.

The free swing of the coyote guard-lantern plates sends forth periodical flashes of illumination from the lantern which penetrate the darkness, throwing fright into the camp of the marauding pest whose stealthy invasions of sheep herds may be of nightly frequency. Other than reflecting a weird flash of light, a strong wind may serve to create a jangling noise. The ingenious forest official does not tell us how the guard-lantern plates operate in the absence of a wind. It is to be assumed, however, that the range of its effectiveness is somewhat controlled by the power of wind currents to keep in constant motion the light-reflecting plates.

FRENCH GUN WITH 200-MILE RANGE

Interesting tests of what is claimed to be a gun which may have a range of 200 miles, the invention of Lieutenant Colonel Maze of the French army, were recently made on a model in miniature at the Belgian artillery range at Vivenis, near Liege, before a number of French and Belgian staff officers and artillery experts, says a dispatch from Paris to the Chicago Tribune. The inventor claims a 300-kilometer range as against the 125-kilometer range registered by the German "Big Bertha" in the bombardment of Paris from the St. Gobain forest in November, 1918. The first tests, which continued for six days, were held near the end of December. The small model used as a testing gun was built along special lines, with the caliber of the French 8-inch piece. Colonel Maze has named the gun "Turbo," because, turbine like, the velocity of the projectile increases as the range grows greater. The remarkable range of the gun is claimed to be due to three factors: the nature of the explosive used, the gun itself and the character of the projectile. One of the striking characteristics of the piece is its equal thickness from breech to muzzle. Improvements and refinements of the shell, it is claimed, reduce resistance, giving increased range with the same initial velocity. This is made partly possible through a sharp-pointed nose and a flattened end, thus resembling the shell used by the "Big Bertha." The special barrel used is capable of withstanding a pressure of 3,000 kilograms per square centimeter. The dispatch states that discovery of a certain explosive, which continued to exert its maximum pressure until the shell left the gun, influenced the construction of the "Big Bertha," which type of gun, it is added, has now been further developed in the "Turbo," after experiments with and close study of the German gun. French and Belgian authorities are represented as endeavoring to keep particulars of the new piece of ordnance secret, despite Article VIII of the Covenant of the League of Nations, wherein the signatories are pledged to inform each other concerning their armaments.

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COPPER MAN FROZEN TO DEATH

Thomas Ward, president and general manager of the Ward Copper Company, of New York, was found frozen to death a few miles from Teller, Alaska, January 12, say advices reaching Nome.

Ward left the company's mining camp in the inner Seward peninsula with an Eskimo man and woman and two dog teams, to go to Teller, a reindeer station on Grantly Harbor.

After reaching the top of the divide above Teller the three became lost in the darkness. The Eskimos said they decided to go back to a cabin they had seen, but Ward proceeded alone.

For the next two days the Eskimos said they were storm bound in the cabin, and on the third day battled their way to the station, only to learn that Ward had not arrived. A searching party started out the next day and found Ward's sled and dog team on Dewey Creek.

Members of the searching party said Ward had evidently left his team on the morning of the twelfth and started for Teller, ten miles distant. He probably became confused, they said, and headed in the wrong direction.

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POURS OIL ON FIRE

Six members of the family of James Adkins, living fourteen miles north of Washington Court House, Ohio, were burned to death when fire destroyed their home. Adkins was fatally burned.

The fire followed the explosion of a coal stove into which Adkins poured kerosene on hot coals in an effort to start a blaze quickly.

Soon after 2 o'clock in the morning Mr. Adkins arose to heat water for his three-weeks-old daughter, who was ill. He was pouring kerosene into the stove from a two-gallon can, when there was an explosion, and the burning oil was thrown to all parts of the room. Mrs. Adkins and her baby, who occupied a bed in a corner of the room, were enveloped in flames. The three other children and Mr. Bennett occupied a single room on the second floor of the four-room dwelling.

Adkins rushed from the burning building, rolled in the mud, and then ran a half mile to a neighbor's house for help.

By the time neighbors arrived at the dwelling it was a mass of smouldering embers. Adkins was brought to a hospital here.



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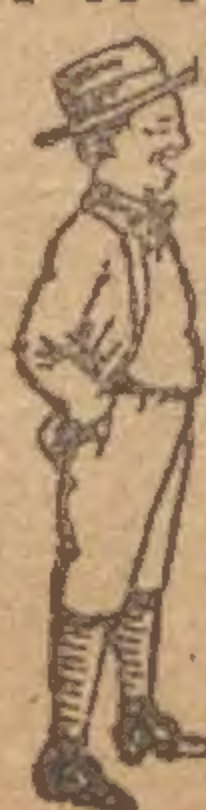
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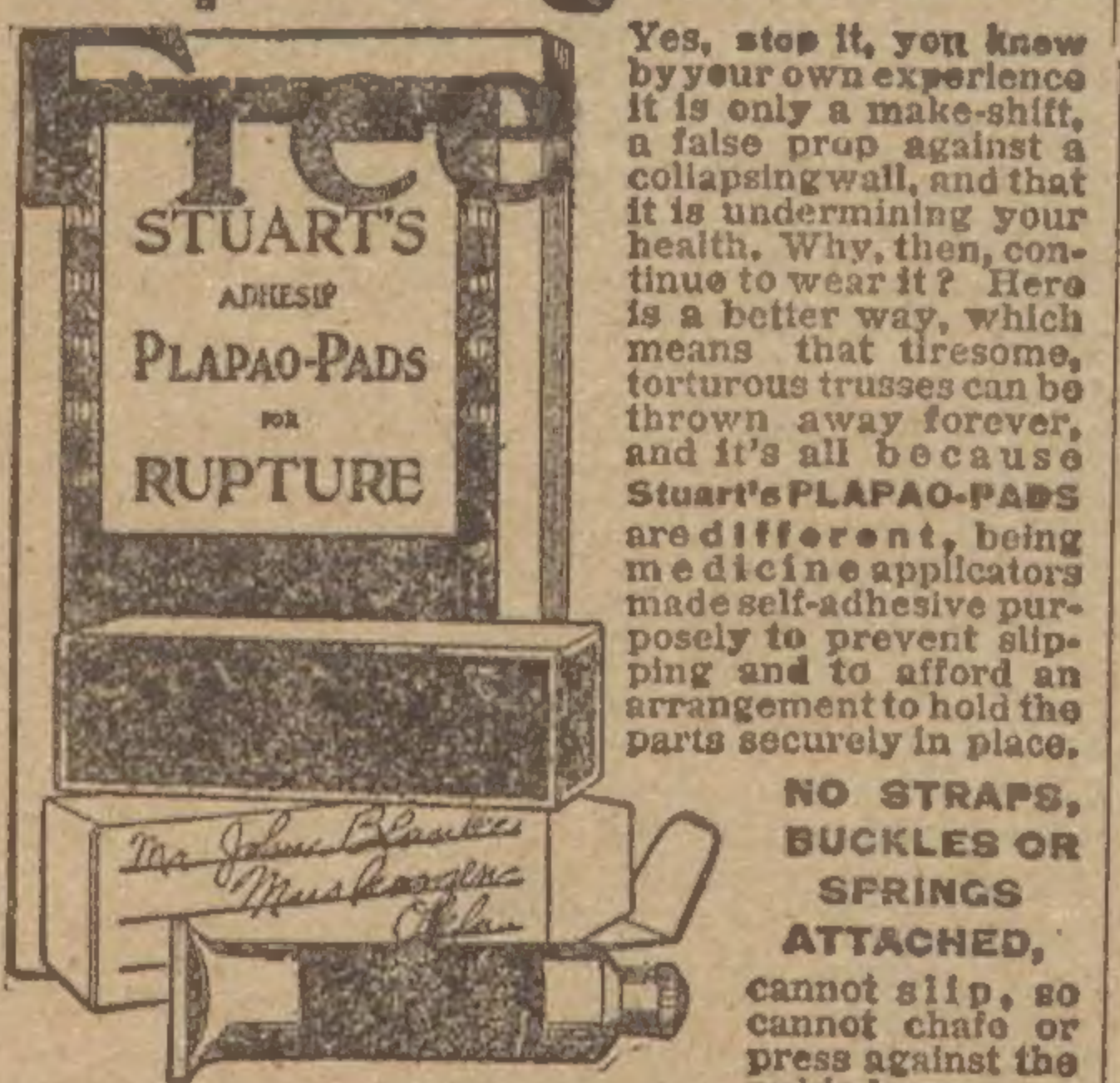
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